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LLOYD GEORGE ON DEMOCRACY

THE NEW

STATESMAN AND NATION

The Week-end Review

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CONTENTS

	Page
COMMENTS	37
WHAT'S FUN TO THEM	40
DEMOCRACY AND DICTATORSHIP	41
SPAIN AND TUNIS. By Kingsley Martin	42
COMMENT AND DREAM. By E. M. Forster	43
THIS ENGLAND	44
THE ATTACK ON NEW ZEALAND. By M. Chilcott	45
TEA. By Y. Y.	45
COUNTRY NOTES. By V. Sackville-West	47
THE MAKING OF A COMPOSER. By W. J. Turner	47
SURROUNDED BY CHILDREN. By Stevie Smith	48
THE MOVIES. By Peter Galway	48
PLAYS AND PICTURES	49
CORRESPONDENCE	50
From G. M. Bayliss; Margaret Gardiner; V. R. H. Austin; Ronald Gurner; Jean W. Rowntree; J. B. Priestley; Princess Antoine Bibesco; The Earl of Lytton and others; H. D. Waley; Philip Jordan; E. M. Pye.	
BOOKS IN GENERAL. By David Garnett	54
REVIEWS:	
New Novels. By Desmond Shawe-Taylor	55
Dante in English. By Stephen Spender	56
Shanghai, 1927. By G. F. Hudson	58
A Beautiful Rebel. By Austin Clarke	60
The Islanders. By Raymond Mortimer	62
Céline. By G. W. Stonier	64
SHORTER NOTICES	66
WEEK-END COMPETITIONS	68
CROSSWORD	69
THE WEEK IN THE CITY. By Dives	70

THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

MR. CHAMBERLAIN and Lord Halifax are in the thick of their "agendaless" visit to Rome as we write. It would be useless at this moment to prophesy the outcome of their talks with the Duce. They broke their journey for a tea-party with M. Daladier in Paris, where "the identity of views of the British and French Governments was fully confirmed." That means on the face of it that Mr. Chamberlain will not attempt to bargain away any French rights or possessions—though the Italian press (backed by the German press) has persistently kept up the pretence that Great Britain is Italy's friend and not France's. Rumour has been busy amongst other things with the possibility of an attempt to revive the old project of the Four-Power conference. But that, whilst it might find favour with Mr. Chamberlain and Signor Mussolini, is in present circumstances quite unpalatable to the French. As for Spain, on which our main fears and hopes inevitably centre, there can, in face of the pledges given and of public opinion in this country, be no question of granting belligerent rights to Franco. That may be regarded at least as one negative gain. But it is very far from dispelling anxiety about Mr. Chamberlain's Spanish policy. It is deplorable that a British Prime Minister should be even under the suspicion of readiness to abandon the Spanish Peninsula to aggressive Fascist Powers. He ought, on grounds of principle and strategy alike, to be insisting on their complete withdrawal.

The Battles in Spain

General Miaja and bad weather have come to the aid of hard-pressed Catalonia. The surprise attack developed by Government forces south of Madrid on the Estremadura front has won substantial successes; the lead and coal mining district round Penarroya has been reached and, despite a stiffening of insurgent resistance, the road and rail communications between Seville and Burgos are threatened. This counter-stroke cannot be neglected by General Franco. Reinforcements have been rushed from Morocco, and aircraft are being transferred from the Segre arena to Badajoz. It seems doubtful, however, if General Miaja has yet succeeded in enforcing the transfer of rebel infantry from Catalonia. In that vital sector bad weather now favours the defence. The advance of the insurgents' left, between Pons and the Andorran frontier, has come to a standstill. The Government troops have been extricated successfully from the dangerous salient in the Artesa-Lerida-Borjas Blancas triangle. In the south, desperate fighting proceeds round Montblanch. Retreat here would make the position of the Government divisions between Tarragona and the Ebro highly precarious; but the second main line of defence is still intact, and it is difficult to believe that General Franco can keep

up for many more days his heavy expenditure of shells. On the Government's supply side, the news of the sale by France of 45,000 tons of flour is welcome.

The President's Faith—and Works

The aftermath of last week's Presidential Message to Congress has been an intensification of the cross-currents in American public opinion. The Budget statement which followed Mr. Roosevelt's declaration that democracy must be vigorously defended revealed his evident determination to back his faith with works. Next year's rearmament expenditure is to rise from £200 millions to £270 millions; the "pump-priming" flow of Federal outgoings on relief and W.P.A. projects is to continue; and a further £700 millions are to be added to the national debt. Economically, as well as from the military standpoint, America's "war potential" is to be keyed up. The defence proposals have been well received in Congress and the press, and opposition to deficit financing is practically confined to conservative Wall Street circles. The conflict of opinion relates to the President's hints of reorientation of foreign policy in the direction of supporting actively the victims of Fascist aggression. Senator Pittman has announced that Congress may be asked to repeal the Neutrality Act, and that he would favour such a course. Senator Nye declares that the Spanish Embargo Act at least should be repealed. On the other hand, the Republican Party is exploiting the strong isolationist feelings which still exist throughout the Union. The President is warned that America must never again be embroiled in European hostilities, and any Bill conveying powers to the Executive to "name the aggressor" and impose even economic sanctions would have a stormy passage in the new Congress. Bearing in mind that the President is not unmindful of the importance of the Jewish vote, we doubt whether more than moral support from the United States is probable at present for democracies in peril abroad; but even that is not to be despised.

Colonel Beck in Berlin

That Colonel Beck during his recent ten days in France did not even see M. Bonnet is in itself a significant sign of the decline of French influence in Eastern Europe. Most probably the Polish Government is still sitting on the fence not between France and Germany, but between Germany and Russia. While the Soviet Government courted his favour by permitting the Polish Church in Moscow to reopen in place of the Communist Club which had been substituted for it, Colonel Beck was in conference with Herr Hitler. It is too early to assess the results of this meeting, but if the report is true that the Nazis have gained permission to construct a motor road across the Polish Corridor on the model of the proposed *Autobahn* through Czechoslovakia, it looks as if Colonel Beck is about to return once more to the Nazi fold. With his country now, as always, on the edge of revolution and with the future of Danzig and Memel still undecided, there is no other course open to him, since Mussolini has decided to cut his losses in Central Europe. But no doubt he did his best to persuade Herr Hitler that the next German mobilisation could most profitably take place not on the eastern but on the western frontier.

The Nazis in Central Europe

Not unconnected with Colonel Beck's visit to Berlin, came the news of a battle last week-end at Munkacevo, a small Ruthenian town which had been handed over to the Hungarians by the Italo-German arbitrators at Vienna. If Czech troops were the aggressors, as they probably were, they received their orders from sources nearer Berlin. Indeed, the incident seems to have been arranged as a reminder to the Colonel of what might happen to Poland, should he persist in his flirtations with Russia. The dead of Munkacevo may become the first martyrs in the cause of Ukrainian independence. Farther down in the Balkans German pressure intensifies daily. The reactionary Government of Hungary tries to stave off "Gleichschaltung" by aping the anti-semitism of the Nazis, while King Carol, having escaped assassination by members of the Iron Guard over the week-end, has hurriedly granted full rights of self-determination to the German minority in Rumania, in the hope of thus appeasing the German appetite. Hitler's ambitions are still centred upon the Ukraine, and by early next summer he may have achieved sufficient control of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Rumania to begin an active campaign on the frontiers of Russia itself. Discontent in the Russian Ukraine, caused by a bad harvest and by the centralising tendencies of the Soviet regime, is growing and is stimulated by German agents. The prospects of a complete realisation of *Mein Kampf* become rosier.

Dr. Schacht's Problems

Mr. Montagu Norman's visit to Berlin has brought no immediate results. Dr. Schacht's plan, for getting rid of the Jews at the maximum profit to the Nazis, was no doubt one topic of conversation, and is being further discussed this week with Mr. Rublee, the American director of the Inter-Governmental Committee on Refugees. But the Jews are not Dr. Schacht's chief worry. Foreign successes, combined with continual pressure on the standard of living, have given an ever-increasing influence to the extremists in the Party. Now that Dr. Goebbels is under a cloud, Herr Himmler, head of the Gestapo and of the S.S., though he remains in the background, is probably the most influential of Hitler's lieutenants, while Robert Ley, who controls the Labour Front, has succeeded in making himself the mouthpiece of Labour discontent. Together these two are pressing for renewed foreign activity, for still further encroachments by the State on the already diminished rights of private property, and for a frontal attack on the Catholic Church. Dr. Schacht, as the representative of "conservative" interests, is in a quandary. Faced by declining exports and by threats of British retaliation against Nazi trade methods, he would, of course, like a loan. Such a policy, however, is not only unacceptable in the City, but is anathema to the Nazis themselves, who refuse once again to become the "slaves of international finance." But even if a loan is not practical politics, Dr. Schacht will be able to use his old argument that Britain should not irritate the extremists into violent action by any drastic measures against the German trade drive. At this sort of blackmail he is an adept, and so long as it is effective, he will continue to be employed by the Party which despises him so profoundly.

Palestine and Syria

We are still waiting for Mr. MacDonald to assemble his conference on Palestine, and the British Army still struggles with its grim task of suppressing the rebellion. The German press continues to make all the capital it can out of these military operations. The War Office has been driven to issue a statement to refute the charges of murder, robbery and starvation levelled at the British troops and their officers, and to show that the measures, regrettable as they may be, are both necessary and conducted with all the humanity possible. But this statement, with its explanation of the facts, has done nothing to abate the ardour of the Nazi propagandists; they have indeed twisted phrases in it into an "admission of terrorism." Meanwhile the French have their trouble in Syria. The decision to replace their mandate by treaties with the two "republics" of Syria and Lebanon is now meeting with opposition in Paris, and this has caused a ferment in Syria. What the Syrians will make of their independence, when they do get it, remains to be seen. The country is in an unhappy state, economically and politically, and it looks likely to be worse if left to stew in its own juice. It may well be that the best solution of the Syrian, as well as of the Palestinian, problem is to be found in the plan of Federation of States which we have referred to more than once in these columns.

Educationists Confer

This year's Conference of Educational Associations gave a large share of its attention to the problems of university education. The conditions are so widely different for the most part in Oxford and Cambridge and in the mainly non-residential universities that generalisation is difficult, and discussion tends to pursue different lines. There is a growing disposition to think of the newer universities as regional centres of higher education which ought to be much more closely linked to the entire educational system of the regions to which they belong. Many proposals were made for bringing municipal and other local colleges and teachers' training colleges into closer connection with the universities, for providing more refresher courses and summer schools, and for developing extra-mural education on new lines, so as to bring the universities into touch with a wider section of the population. The new Report on secondary schools naturally raised many questions about the proper relationship between school and university curricula, and also provoked further debate on the ancient theme of the relations between vocational and cultural studies, especially in respect of the proper place of technical education in the educational system as a whole. As for Oxford and Cambridge, a speaker who was reported to have made, but did not really make, the proposal that they should become schools of post-graduate study stirred up a discussion concerning the proper relationship between universities of the residential and non-residential type. What he actually suggested was that admission to Oxford or Cambridge should normally require higher qualifications than at present, and that this might be secured by requiring a prior period of study at a non-residential university up to some sort of intermediate standard.

The Wheat Surplus

The International Wheat Advisory Committee, on which 22 countries, including both importers and exporters, are represented, has been meeting in London this week. The prospect before the Committee is not pleasant, though it has its compensations from the standpoint of those who want to see an extensive policy of wheat storage adopted in this country. Last year the world consumed about 84 per cent. of the wheat produced; this year, owing to the large harvests, total consumption is estimated at only 75 per cent. of the crop, involving a still larger carry-over and a serious risk of a collapse in prices. The plain fact is that, in face of protective policies in the importing countries and a continuing shift from wheat to other foods wherever the standard of life is high enough, the world is producing more wheat than it can consume unless the countries which are still below the wheat-consuming standard can be enabled to buy. Mr. MacDougall, representing Australia, and other speakers emphasised the need for a shift of farming from cereal production to protective foodstuffs—milk and dairy produce, fruit and vegetables—but obviously such a shift is bound to be slow, and is limited by the purchasing power of working-class households. Others wanted the importation of vegetable fats prohibited, in order to raise the demand for butter, and yet others stressed the need for helping the poorer countries to increase their consumption of wheat. The solution that the high-cost producers should stop protecting their own wheat-growers and turn to stimulating the output of foodstuffs for which they possess a comparative advantage was too Utopian to be directly formulated in this madcap era.

Poverty in Bristol

A modest booklet just published under the title of *The Standard of Living in Bristol* (by Herbert Tout; *Arrowsmith*, 1s.) supplies the first fruits of the University of Bristol's Social Survey. It is a most interesting report, which reveals Bristol as among the most prosperous places in England, so far as working-class standards are concerned. This relatively fortunate situation is due mainly to the wide variety, and the largely sheltered character, of Bristol's industries, and to the recent rise of the aircraft industry, which now employs more persons than any group of occupations except building and distribution. It is true that the survey was taken in 1937, when employment was a good deal better than it is now; but Bristol has suffered less than most places during the past year's recession. It is noteworthy that instead of adopting any of the existing "poverty lines," the Bristol inquirers have adopted a new one of their own, more generous than the "Bowley line," but well below the "Rowntree human needs" estimate. Their own line works out, at 1937 prices, at 12s. 9d. for a single man and 37s. 8d. for a man, wife and three dependent children of varying ages, exclusive of rent. On this basis nearly 11 per cent. of the working-class families were found to be living in "poverty" even in 1937 in this prosperous area. If the calculation had been made on the basis used in the London Survey, the proportion in "poverty" would have been about 7 per cent., as compared with about 10 per cent. in London.

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WHAT'S FUN TO THEM

IF the Lord Privy Seal savoured unalloyed the delights of his skating holiday in Switzerland, he must combine with magisterial demeanour a certain insensibility to public criticism. Even in the leisured, care-free *Gemüthlichkeit* of Europe's playground he can hardly have failed to perceive that at home his A.R.P. schemes and promises were getting an increasingly bad press. Fleet Street admittedly made the most of its opportunities; the effectively photographed ducks swimming in flooded, derelict trenches may well have been imported by newspaper camera-men to point a pictorial moral, and the groups of schoolboys fishing therein for tiddlers were posed, one suspects, by editorial arrangement. The jibes, however, directed daily at Sir John Anderson's untended duck-ponds were merely symptomatic of genuine public concern, which the press in its various fashions was truly reflecting, at the apparent chaos in the entire programme of civilian defence.

Back in Whitehall last Monday, the Lord Privy Seal essayed a little counter-publicity on his own account. Photographed with minatory forefinger raised in the manner of those who do a dance-step called "trucking," he invited a conference of newspaper-men to reflect that all work and no play would make Jack and his colleagues dull boys—over-driven to a Departmental standstill. Let the country be reassured. The forthcoming voluntary recruiting drive would fill the gaps in the first line of civil defence, and would provide a substantial reserve. Training facilities would be forthcoming for volunteers. Orders for equipment were being accelerated; already the appliances for over three-quarters of the 21,000 projected Fire Brigade units had been ordered, and deliveries would be substantially complete by the end of 1939. Efforts would be made to inculcate a "corporate sense" in air-raid wardens; the provision of bomb-proof shelters was not excluded from possible consideration. Since the Government was "working on the assumption that there is a risk of war within a comparatively short time," the twenty million pound programme of steel splinter-proof hutches must serve for the present; but—once more let the nation take heart of grace—evacuation plans were nearing completion. Transport arrangements had been perfected; detailed arrangements for the housing and feeding of refugees from vulnerable areas would shortly be worked out to the last comma. Already the country had been surveyed and mapped out in three classes of area—districts congested, vulnerable and marked out for evacuation by non-essential elements; "neutral" districts not to be evacuated or used as an asylum for refugees; "safe" districts designated for the reception of the evacuated.

Sir John's defence of his plans for recruitment and supply of equipment consisted, to a great extent, of prophetic hopes. He offered no explanation of the curiously arbitrary manner—dictated seemingly not by relative congestion of population, but by local authorities' frontiers—in which the country has been mapped. He did not expound the reasons which have led to the decision that Morris-Oxford is a suitable asylum for refugees, and that there is no need to evacuate non-essential inhabitants from towns the size of Oldham or Coventry. He omitted to answer the devastating criticism of his steel back-yard kennels issued by the Science Commission of the International Peace Campaign. Even so, his apologia might have carried some conviction had it not been for the curious gloss placed on the blessed word "evacuation" by the Minister of Health while the Lord Privy Seal cavorted on the Swiss ice. Last Friday Mr. Walter Elliot loosed upon patient, if somewhat mystified, local authorities a flux of documents—Circular 1759, Memo. Ev. 1, Forms Ev. 1-4—embodying his Ministry's contribution to the solution of the evacuation problem. "Children First" is the slogan. With the aid of voluntary inspectors, enjoined to make "kindly and tactful" manners serve as a substitute for compulsory powers of investigation, local authorities are required to make a survey of accommodation available for children evacuated from dangerous areas. Whether "available" is to be regarded as synonymous with "offered" is not quite clear. Householders who volunteer to receive children are to be paid at the rate of 10*s.* 6*d.* a week for one child, and 8*s.* 6*d.* per head—an odd contrast with U.A.B. allowances!—where two or more are taken. The question of compulsion is dodged; but the inspectors may "properly" tell householders with room to spare that refusal to take children may result in enforced billeting of adults; the extent to which "private arrangements" to accommodate relatives from bombed areas "can be allowed to stand" will be considered later; and, if a householder declines to volunteer accommodation, his dwelling's capacity may be arbitrarily assessed by the voluntary inspector and added to the local authority's roll of available room.

We have here, then, on paper the makings of that finished scheme for the reception of persons from evacuated areas so confidently promised by Sir John Anderson. Stay; we go too fast. Not merely does the absence of statutory powers to investigate seem likely to defeat local authorities' loyal efforts to make a comprehensive survey; the unhappy officials of these bodies are loaded with many supplementary and inhibitive injunctions. They must write off as "unavailable" the accommodation in houses occupied by an invalid, or whose water-supply is "inadequate," or whose spare rooms are likely to be needed (in whose judgment, God knows) for additional "war-purposes" farm labour. Given these exclusions, it might have been thought that the erection of standing camps for refugees would necessarily have figured in Mr. Elliot's plans. But this is not so; house-billeting, with the assurance that "increased supplies of food will be made available for shopkeepers," is the order of the day. The real point, however, is who is to be billeted. Children, answers Mr. Elliot. Nobody else? Well, scarcely anybody. "Duty will require the great majority of people to remain where they are"—patriotic targets for the Heinkel bomber.

Did Mr. Elliot speak out of turn? It is difficult to suppose so; but, if the Cabinet has approved his announcement that evacuation is to be confined almost exclusively to children and their necessary attendants, what becomes of Sir John Anderson's argument that bomb-proof shelters would largely be wasted effort in view of plans to evacuate non-essential adults for whose protection they had been designed? The discrepancy between the policies of the nonchalant Minister of Health and the pontifical Lord Privy Seal appears to call for stern work by that Falstaffian

" mountain of mummy " who graces the portfolio of Co-ordination.

The situation is not without its grim humour. Oblivious, seemingly, to the obvious fact that evacuation plans can hardly be completed until it is known who is to be evacuated, Sir John Anderson contemptuously dismisses as " a useless instrument " the compulsory National Register which alone would provide a basis for distributing the population, if war comes, in planned areas and occupations. He asks the nation to rely on flimsy makeshift protection in vulnerable areas on the ground that evacuation is the watchword. And then comes colleague Elliot, who knows well that in the event of war the Government will move far west of Oxford, yet declares that " the national interest will best be served by the avoidance of an indiscriminate movement of large numbers of people from one part of the country to another "—forgetting that, if this be the policy, failure to provide bomb-proof shelters, at no matter what cost, should be cause for impeachment of the responsible Minister. Lion and Unicorn—behold a magnificent inter-departmental battle. A.R.P. is water-logged by a deluge of conflicting communiqués and circulars : civilian defence becomes a splendid arena for Ministerial fun and games. Unhappily, what's fun to them may be death not merely to insignificant individuals like ourselves, but to the precious heritage of democracy left defenceless by its elected defenders.

DEMOCRACY AND DICTATORSHIP

LORD PALMERSTON at seventy astonished the Victorians by his youth, vigour and " jauntiness." Mr. Lloyd George at seventy-five displays the same qualities to an even more remarkable degree. With his cloak streaming behind him in the breeze, he strode over his land, showing me his pigs, his prize apple trees and raspberry canes, the modern architecture of the houses on his estate, the great irrigation scheme which has turned his acres of the sandy soil of Churt into one of the most fertile of British farms and proved what could be done generally with British agriculture if the State took over the land—as Mr. Lloyd George has so long urged that it should do. Later, when we returned to the house, he was no less fluent about democracy, the Government and the need for a constructive home and foreign policy.

Kingsley Martin.—I am grateful, Mr. Lloyd George, for the opportunity of asking you a few questions. Many people in this country to-day are asking whether our traditional institutions are capable of dealing with the emergency in which we find ourselves. In particular they urge that democracy, or what Mussolini calls demoplutocracy, is necessarily at a disadvantage when threatened by totalitarian States. Now of all people alive you have the most experience of running Britain at a time of great danger, and I want to begin by asking whether in your opinion democracy is necessarily less efficient than dictatorship.

Mr. Lloyd George.—Present conditions in Europe have temporarily created that impression. It is the tragedy of the hour that the authoritarian States have secured for their chieftains two remarkable men with an undoubted genius for leadership. It is an interesting paradox that both Hitler and Mussolini rose to leadership under democratic conditions. They were allowed their public meetings, their provocative marches and demonstrations, by the democratic Governments which they intended to destroy. That by the way. What is certain is that no century has thrown up three more notable revolutionary leaders than Lenin, Mussolini and Hitler. To these might be added Stalin. On the other hand, ordered democracy has had the accursed bad luck of striking on a poor vein of statesmanship amongst those who are guiding its destinies when the battle of liberty in Europe and the East is being fought. But the two systems have not yet been put to the final test of endurance. Hitler and Mussolini have so far been skilful enough to avoid developments that would place too great a strain on their resources. The feebleness and pusillanimity of democratic Ministers has enabled the dictators to win rich and resounding victories at the minimum of sacrifice in life and treasure. All the startling campaigns won by German-Nazism have been achieved with hardly any loss of blood. Mussolini bluffed the nations of the world into surrender over Abyssinia without firing a shot at one of them. Hitler and Mussolini are capturing the mineral resources and the best strategic positions in Spain with the stupid acquiescence of the two great democracies, whose lines of communications in any future wars are thus being placed in fatal jeopardy. There has been no real test of comparative effectiveness. These immense achievements, so easily won, are beguiling people all the world over into a false belief that dictatorship is more efficient than democracy. One is strong and sapient—the other is soft and stupid. They forget what happened twenty years ago when three great democracies crushed these military autocracies in the grimmest trial of strength between nations ever witnessed on this earth. I am now the sole survivor of the statesmen who took part in the supreme organisation and direction of that great struggle.

K. M.—Did this experience lead you to the view that autocracy was at an advantage in waging war against democracy ?

L. G.—As an emergency which tries to the utmost the heart and the nerves of a people, there is no test comparable to war. And in the greatest war of all time the democracies won. The autocracies—on both sides—all fell with a crash. Germany and Austria had the initial advantage. They were better prepared and they had inner lines of communication. But the free peoples won in the end, and they won because they had free institutions. The centre of authority was in closer touch with the masses of the people. In Parliament and in the municipalities they were led by the men whom they had chosen to guide and to govern them in any eventuality that might befall their country, county or city. The result was that when the ultimate stage was reached, when the belligerent peoples were exhausted and on the point of collapse, the free nations had in every town and village a band of trained and trusted leaders throughout the land to whose appeals its citizens were accustomed to listen.

K. M.—What would you consider to be a real test of the comparative power of endurance of the two systems ?

L. G.—The first and the most important is the well-being and the contentment of the population of the country as a whole. Both in Britain and in France the bulk of the people are infinitely better off than they are in Italy. That no one ever doubts. The same thing applies—in a less degree—to the comparison between our economic conditions and those which exist in Germany. On the surface there would appear to be more unrest and discontent in France than in Italy. That is due to the fact that, despite the poverty that exists in Italy, all public expression of protest against the policy that is responsible for it is suppressed.

K. M.—Did you have to make any modifications in the democratic system in order to obtain the necessary efficiency for war ?

L. G.—Not one. Neither my predecessor, Mr. Asquith, nor myself, found it necessary to make any change in the constitution and institutions of the country in order to equip ourselves with the necessary powers to wage war to the utmost of Britain's strength. Our free institutions worked without a hitch. I doubt whether it was necessary even to make any change in the procedure of Parliament in order to expedite business. On two occasions we had secret sessions of the House of Commons ; I willingly agreed to that, and I explained the situation with the greatest frankness. I was confident that no member would divulge what passed, and my confidence

was completely justified. Parliament shortened discussions, and carried through the necessary legislation without any loss of time. I would not call the change which I effected in the numbers of the Cabinet a fundamental alteration in the Constitution. I practically reverted to the small Cabinet of the past.

K. M.—It is now suggested that criticism of the Government in an emergency is "fouling one's own nest." In the more difficult period of the war did you find that the existence of a parliamentary opposition entitled to criticise the administration unduly hampered the Government?

L. G.—There were three Governments during the period of the war. One a Liberal Government and two Coalition. Each in turn was subjected to parliamentary criticism, but I cannot think of any occasion when Parliament refused either Mr. Asquith or myself any authority or power with which we were advised the executive ought to be equipped in order to carry on the war more effectively. This great democratic repository of power chosen by the nation to represent its power and to control its resources in peace and war responded to every demand made upon it, whether by Mr. Asquith's Government or by mine. The same thing applied to the French Parliament. M. Clemenceau was never hampered by Parliament in the final rally of France. If there were any delays, mistakes, inadequacies or inefficiencies in the organisation and direction of the war, either in France or in Britain, they were not due to the working of parliamentary institutions. They were due to faults in leadership, either at the political, military or naval centres of direction.

K. M.—People say that the administrative changes required to-day are unprecedented. Can you give me a concrete example of a necessary piece of national organisation comparable to those now under discussion?

L. G.—We went far beyond anything which is now contemplated in the way of national reorganisation, and no difficulties were created by Parliament. I can give you two or three examples. Practically the whole control of the industries and the raw materials of this country was handed over to a new Ministry—the Ministry of Munitions. The shipping of this country was placed under the orders of another new Ministry—the Ministry of Shipping. The distribution and the apportionment of the food of this country were placed under the complete direction of another new Ministry—the Ministry of Food. Speaking of the latter, it is very significant that no sterner or fairer or more successful apportionment of the food of the country was imposed in any belligerent land than that which was imposed upon and accepted by all classes in Britain, and that without any parliamentary protest from any quarter of the House. The mere fact that it was known it had to be carried out with scrupulous equality made it acceptable. Although I was Prime Minister at the time I found it exceedingly difficult to get enough food on my table if an extra guest appeared. Of butter, meat and potatoes I found I had often not enough to go round. I had to make up the deficiency by apologies to my guests.

K. M.—Do you regard the slowness of our war preparation as due to some inherent slowness in democracy?

L. G.—In some respects democracy is slow. It is more reluctant than autocracy to resort to violence for the advancement of its aims—and as it is averse to contemplate violent measures it is therefore tardier in initiating preparations for the use of force against its neighbours. But that has its merits. The moral influence of the dislike to shed human blood has its beneficent effect in creating an antipathy to war and dethroning it from its glittering but pernicious sovereignty over the dreamlands of valorous as well as of morbid youth. As long as Germany and Italy clung to free institutions they constituted no menace to the peace of the world.

December, 1938.

[This is the third of our series of Conversations on Democracy and Efficiency. The first two, which appeared in the issues of December 31 and January 7, were with Mr. Herbert Morrison and Mr. Winston Churchill.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

SPAIN AND TUNIS

CHRISTMAS, BARCELONA

IT was bitterly cold when we reached Barcelona on Christmas Day. Last time I was there, fifteen months earlier, Franco had still not fully bombed Catalonia into the conviction that he was determined on her conquest or destruction. Now the enemy is at the gates; the deep political differences that divide Spaniards have disappeared, at least for the duration of the war, and the Government is universally recognised as strong, democratic and efficient. That Spain has performed a miracle in organising a great armed resistance everyone knows; that the home administration of the Government should be so admirably efficient I had hardly dared to hope.

Life is grim and resolute. There is no propaganda or need for it; no slogans or hymns of hate; not even a poster portrait of Del Vayo or Negrin (who alone among the political leaders of my experience genuinely hates publicity). The constant air raids no longer create excitement. I watched a midday raid when the planes came well over the city. All except military traffic stopped at the alarm. The women with children and some of the men immediately went to the shelters, which are plentiful in the middle of the city and adequate for anything except perhaps a direct hit by a bomb of very heavy calibre. Everyone outside the shelter moved to the cover of a doorway. When the anti-aircraft guns began, there was a movement, especially among the younger spirits, back into the streets to watch the duel in the air. During another raid we were in a munition factory. Some of the workers politely conducted us to a deep shelter below the floor of the shop, but before long we were all above ground again searching the sky for the raiders. There are often as many as five raids during a moonlight night. People told me that they were far too tired and indifferent to get up and go down to a shelter even if one was close at hand. After all, the damage is usually slight and the risk not too great. After one raid we saw the wreck of a house; five casualties they said; three bodies would be dug out of the débris. Barcelonetta, the area round the docks, is of course badly smashed up and long since evacuated. A few persistent and impoverished people we saw still living among the ruined houses. Only the great raids of March, 1938, when the Germans tried out their heavy bombs, seriously troubled the population. You can see a place in the centre of the town where big buildings were totally wrecked by aerial torpedoes or very large bombs. For the rest, it is part of the day's work. Eight casualties last raid? A shrug of the shoulders, one's thoughts on the day's rations and on the husband or son at the front from which by day and night one can now hear the distant roll of Italian and German artillery.

Food is now more important than shelters. The Government bought large quantities in the summer; if there is shortage to-day, it is largely because no one had anticipated that the British would prove quite indifferent to the bombing of their merchant fleet. In Madrid I hear that the hunger is great, that there is little, or no milk for the children, but that the rationing system is so good, so equal, that no one complains either of waste or injustice. In Barcelona the shortage is far less serious and the food rationing, if not perfect, is at least admirably organised. This was the one matter which we had time to investigate with some thoroughness, and I came away satisfied that everyone who sends money to feed Government Spain can be assured that it is well spent. At midday we went round the centres, now all over the city, at which the Catalan administration provides meals for children. It was Christmas, and a morsel of meat, cut very thin and about the area of the back of a match-box, was dropped into each child's plate of lentils. The devotion of those in charge, and their pride in seeing that every child had his or her exact share and ate it quietly and comfortably at a little table, was a sight I shall not readily forget. Dr. Russell, who has worked so long with the Society of Friends in Spain, was with us. She told us that

most of these children, pinched and pale though they were, could still be saved if they got more food soon. But she showed us in face after face the grim signs of famine oedema. (That day a British ship was bombed in the harbour, and I recalled how rickets seemed to war-time Germany to be in sober truth *die englische kraukleit* (the English disease).

Many of the fine houses of the rich are now used as schools for the orphans, refugees and children from devastated parts of the town. At one after another we saw the morning distribution of bread and milk. Every child was clean—just how this is managed in a town without soap is a mystery I never fathomed—every child quietly and solemnly ate its sparse meal, bursting into delighted smiles and cries of gratitude when we added a bit of chocolate for the Christmas feast. Sometimes there was cocoa and a special treat of dates or other fruit. We never saw butter or margarine while we were in Spain, and there is now a shortage of olive oil. Fats, I think, are wanted in Barcelona almost as much as milk; one recalls that it was lack of fat that undermined the resistance of the civil population of Germany in 1918. The only fat we saw distributed was in the parcels given out under the new scheme by which people in France, England, Mexico, South America, and indeed all over the world, are now "adopting" particular families in Spain. These contained a good chunk of lard. The whole of this scheme was working with admirable efficiency.

We talked little politics in Spain. Isolated, betrayed by the Governments that should have befriended them, Catalans and Spaniards know that they are fighting what may be the last battle of democracy in Europe. They no longer waste breath at Geneva; they have learnt who are their friends and who their enemies. No people could have found finer political leaders in their darkest hour; what men could do Del Vayo and Negrin and their colleagues have done and are doing. Del Vayo I found as high-spirited and undaunted as ever; Negrin once again impressed me, as he did in 1937, as a rare and, indeed, as a great man. A physiologist (an "intellectual," his enemies say), he has been compelled by events to become a man of action. Buoyant, humorous, a man of immense vitality, he works sixteen hours a day; he had just left his desk when I saw him at his house a little before midnight. Ministers, soldiers and airmen made up the company. We talked and watched a film until I will not say what hour of the morning. He showed no sign of fatigue when the party broke up. The difference I noticed between 1937 and 1938 was that then it still seemed likely that Britain and France would change their policy in Spain if only to save themselves from destruction. To-day, after Munich, we talked on the assumption that Britain and France had decided on suicide.

NEW YEAR, TUNIS

In Tunis the French were certainly trying to persuade themselves that they were still alive. M. Daladier is arriving; the crowded streets are gay with flags; the special body of the *gardes mobiles* from Paris, the soldiers, the superb Zouave cavalry, the big guns, the excited cries of "Tunis is French," the military review and the fifty aeroplanes roaring over the heads of French and Arabs alike, the students singing the *Marseillaise* and breaking the windows of the Italian travel bureau—what better proof of life could you want? The climax is M. Daladier's speech. The phrases roll out. Liberty. France, true to her friends and her great traditions. . . . France "invincible" . . . What impression had M. Daladier made? The French were cheering; the Italians were not present; the Arabs, men of substance in fine robes, sat solidly eating, dispassionate, fat, possibly a little stupid. Had their complete impassivity any political significance? The *anciens combattants* at my table were also lacking in enthusiasm. M. Daladier, they said, had not been nearly explicit enough. This speech would not impress Mussolini or reassure people against concessions *à la Runciman*. Perhaps this criticism reached M. Daladier's ears; in any case he spoke at Algiers with more precision. Most of the press of French Africa was well satisfied; one journal, in a phrase that must have tickled Dr. Goebbels, declared after M. Daladier's reception that Tunis had now carried out her "plebiscite"!

Who could be considered to have recorded his vote at this plebiscite? The hundred thousand French of course. Then some thousands of anti-Fascist Italians who prefer France to Italy. But what of the two and a half million Arabs? I have talked to a considerable number of Arabs since Daladier's speech both in Tunis and in the interior. I have not met one who does not prefer France to Italy. They know too well the fate of the natives in Libya. I cannot find that Italian propaganda, in spite of French charges against the nationalist Neo-Destourian movement, has made any real headway among the Arabs. On the contrary, they still look to France as the home of liberty and they looked to M. Daladier to relieve the needs which the French colonists of Tunis will not recognise. The leader of the Neo-Destours, Bourghiba, is in prison, and the organisation itself illegal. I have heard that all over the country Arabs crowded the cafés to hear on the radio the great speech of the French Premier; they hoped at least for an amnesty for their imprisoned hero and perhaps some economic or political concessions. One Arab described their disappointment; some of them, simple trusting souls, even wept when they realised that M. Daladier had apparently almost forgotten their existence and quite neglected their very moderate demands. It would be interesting if I had time and space to analyse just why the leaders of French democracy here, as in Czechoslovakia and Spain, prefer any policy to that of cultivating the friendship of those who need it and ask for it. To-morrow I hope to go to Rome.

Tunis, January 9th. KINGSLEY MARTIN

COMMENT AND DREAM

On a Deputation

OUR deputation straggled across Whitehall in the sleet, harried by taxis upon either flank. It jumped a bank of slush, slid upon the pavement, caught hands, upsa! and finally entered the Government office of its choice. We took off our hats in the vestibule, then realised that we had done so too soon and were being despised by the commissionaires, so we put them on again. Dinginess and warmth surrounded us; it was like being in the belly of a not very healthy monster. At the top of a huge and enormous stairway (both adjectives are needed to describe the architecture) stretched the huge and enormous room where the Minister had consented to receive us and to hear our prayer. Away at the end of it loomed the picture of some statesman or royalty, huge and enormous, and only partially visible through the spume. Our hats came off for good now. Having hung them and our great-coats and mufflers upon the branches of a metallic tree, we placed ourselves at a table which may justly be called gigantic. The chairs seemed miles apart. Honoured but isolated, we could no longer hold one another's hands. After a minute or two, which were spent in dreamily looking at papers, a door near the picture opened, and the Minister popped in.

All rose to their feet. The Minister recoiled as if horror-struck by the commotion he had created. "Sit sit down, do please sit sit sit," he said. We obeyed. The Minister sat too, supported on either side by important permanencies belonging to his department. . . . He heard our prayer, which was tersely phrased so as not to waste his time. He thanked us and announced that even now he was attempting to grant it, and to find a statutory form in which to embody our wishes and his own. This sounded splendid. But he was finding it difficult to do this, he went on, very, very difficult difficult. His manner now became bewildered and almost childlike; he seemed baffled by the intricacies of drafting and began to hint that the task of doing as he liked might prove to be beyond his power. "If you can can can help me," he pleaded, "if you can can can can . . .," and before we knew where we were, he was giving us a good dressing-down. He said that

if we—not that he meant us personally or any of the organisations that we represented—still if we could check certain undesirable tendencies and ensure that certain contraventions of the law were not repeated in the future we should greatly facilitate his task. The deputation bowed its head like a flower in a frost, and, gazing at my particular bit of the table, I reflected upon the technique which is employed by those in high authority when they desire to administer a snub. They carry on like this: they begin a sentence deeply, gruffly, gently; it moves along like a large friendly animal; then it twitters, turns acid and thin and passes right overhead with a sort of whistling sound. An awed pause followed. However, one of the deputation pulled himself together and gave, I thought, an excellent performance in the same key. We entirely agreed with the Minister, he said, his voice still deep. We felt exactly as the Minister felt. No one could deplore more than we did the tendencies, the manifestations that had been mentioned. But (and here his voice grew thinner) there was surely an Act of Parliament already in existence which dealt with such matters, and this being so (voice now well overhead) the deputation did not quite appreciate why they should be raised here. There was now a pause at the ministerial end of the table, and it was conveyed to us, by shiftings of pince-nez and bleakness of cheeks, that our champion had not contributed anything constructive. Next, one of the important permanencies spoke, and his voice too went up in the air at the end in a bitter whistle. Was the interview going to be an unfriendly one? No, no, nothing as definite as that. Civilities were re-exchanged, time was up, we thanked and were counter-thanked, our opinions were to be given their full weight, and performing a final can-can, the Minister slipped from the room. He had performed his duty, and we ours. We went to the tree which had all the time supported our great-coats, we unwound our mufflers from its branches and placed our hats upon our heads, and we passed down the stairway back into the snow and the dirt outside, and resolved into our component parts.

In Xanadu

"Well it's hardly a patent fang for the hob-dig-a-dig or hold-gum," said I: and awoke from my dream. Nor was it. It was sprays of a St. John's Wort which perhaps exists botanically; each spray being about two feet high and with one large yellow flower on the summit. I wrote this hob-dig-a-dig dream down afterwards, and have since tried to write down other dreams, to see whether they bring me any report of my conduct while I am away in Xanadu. They have not told me much; the outstanding point is that, even there, I seem to live in words. I do not see many visions, nor am I often happy or unhappy or afraid, but a sentence or half a sentence coils about and pops its head out for an instant through the domes of sleep. A pencil lies, or ought to lie, at the side of my bed to transcribe the sentences, but here the censor intervenes. Something prevents me from writing these down, if it can. Again and again I don't take the pencil up because I'm sure I shall remember. I repeat the sentence, memorise it, count the syllables on my fingers, doze, and it's gone: or survives with one word wrong, which destroys its essence. If a dream isn't word-perfect—that is to say if there was a waking moment when I quoted more of it than I now do—I lose all faith in its message. The hob-dig-a-dig sentence represents a dream at its prime, and it has the additional trimming of a visual image. During the last years—and in particular during the worries of 1938—I have got down some more sentences—about thirty all told. I will unload a few of them. The first two seem to have the grand oneiromantic manner:

> The proud treacherous night has almost puzzled me.
> Do you reason yourself with a beast? Hushed and hushed it goes to the terrible.

The following come to grips with daily life:

> To get well known, one builds a road like Benjamin Terrace: or, failing that, one can go abroad.
> How country-simple the white mice! How very young . . .
> The other man made a noise as if he'd been pickling potatoes.
> I merely told you the intelligent talk of an important husband.
> I am sure he has been well fed in between. I have often said so, and in these surroundings.
> A pretty face. An eager pleasure to become the bride of either snoozling soldier.
> What is the name of the grand villa he [Victor Hugo] occupied? [Answer:] Arouille-Maxime.
> Philip of Fisham [name in English history].

I don't know how revealing the above tags are to the psycho-analyst, or how boring to the general public. They surely have a professional air about them: they are the vapourings of someone who is accustomed to writing, and to placing his words. Down in Xanadu we are probably as limited as we are up here; to me it is a land of sentences, not very rich in sights or incidents.

* * *

I sometimes have nightmares, though, and war-ones; in one of these the Italians directed a poison-ray from an aeroplane upon their own villages, and it turned a jar of preserved cherries whitish. Looking back this seems pretty grim—especially as there was a half-jar of cherries standing near the full jar, which was turning whitish too. But on the spot—if it can be called a spot—I didn't worry, and this is characteristic of most dream-life: the emotions and the incidents seldom correspond. A great mistake of literature is that it makes the action of dreams too logical: "I dreamt I stood at the gates of hell and saw all the tortures of the damned and awoke trembling in horror," is the sort of dream that Addison or Shelley turns out to impress us; not a real dream. We are terrified or delighted without reason in that distant world. Dostoievsky, like Coleridge, understood this; the "good" dream of Mitya in *The Brothers Karamazov* is consequently real and spiritually comforting. E. M. FORSTER

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to F. M. Jacques.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Britain's "Iron Man," Minister for Defence Sir John Anderson, vigorously defended his A.R.P. plans last night. Speaking from his hotel at Arosa, Switzerland, he attacked his critics.

"Muddle? There is no muddle," he declared. "Much capital has been made of the fact that some A.R.P. trenches are now water-logged. That is all to the good. Time and exceptionally bad weather have shown us which are unsuitable."—*Sunday Graphic.*

I thought perhaps you'd be interested to know that without standing on tiptoe I can increase my height by four inches while you wait—just by stretching, and haven't met anyone else who could do as well. In case you think I am a contortionist I had better tell you that I am only a draughtsman.—Letter in *Daily Express.*

Thank you, Mr. Chamberlain. We now wish one and all a Happy New Year. To commemorate it we are selling Cosy Slippers from 2*s.* 11½*d.* to 15*s.* 9*d.* Useful New Year Presents. We are Top of the Tree for Value.—Advt. in *Isle of Wight County Press.*

Salesmanship and advertising do most of all to raise the standard of living in any country. Consequently we want better salesmanship and more advertising in 1939.—*Efficiency Magazine.*

Sale. 20 per cent. non-bourgeois furniture. One day only.—Advt. in *Daily Worker.*

Although a good deal of "ideological" prejudice still finds its way into the speeches by members of the Opposition parties, the view of the Government clearly expressed by Mr. Chamberlain, is that the Italian Government has kept the pledges it had given. This makes a good starting point for further talks.—*Gloucestershire Echo.*

THE ATTACK ON NEW ZEALAND

CERTAIN people are thinking of enjoying themselves at the expense of British industry. The New Zealand Labour Government is apparently guilty of this audacity. British industry has supported a variety of enterprises, but Mr. Moir Mackenzie declares that it will not pay for Socialism here or anywhere else. Last month he gave warning that if New Zealand brought its imports control scheme into force in January he and his friends "would go bald-headed for a denouncement of the Ottawa Agreement." The gentleman who is prepared to go to such limits is the Empire Director of the Federation of British Industries, so that ought to give the New Zealand Government something to think about. Actually the Labour Party seems to thrive on opposition, and a challenge from such an influential combine as the F.B.I. is bound to arouse its fighting instincts.

The position in New Zealand is somewhat different from the impression British capitalists would like to create. The people of the Dominion are sober, hard-working and moderately intelligent. They take very little interest in political theories but a great deal in their standard of living, and the party which serves them best stays in. The New Zealander selects his Government with cool calculation based on self interest. The present Government was not elected by a rapacious mob of unemployed or a Communist intelligentsia but by an indiscriminate collection of ordinary people who wanted a solution to their social problem and were prepared to try the scheme put forward by the Labour Party. After four years the satisfaction and confidence of the electors have increased, giving Labour a clear majority of the votes cast in the General Election.

New Zealand maintains a very high standard of living. This is not due to the reckless extravagance of the Labour Government with other people's money but to a co-ordination of hard work with the excellent natural resources which have made New Zealand one of the world's leading primary producers. For the year 1938 the Dominion exported 68 million pounds' worth of primary produce and imported manufactures to the value of 58 millions. The greater part of this trade is with England. Each year of the Labour regime has resulted in an increase of some ten million pounds in the demand for British goods. New Zealand is England's best customer buying a higher percentage of British articles and spending far more per head of population than any other country.

Mr. Mackenzie assumes that Socialism is an extravagant folly, and at the same time asserts that New Zealand has ample funds and resources to meet her obligations without reducing orders from British industrialists. The second statement is true and gives the lie to the first, but New Zealand intends to meet its expenses without curtailing its standard of living. New Zealand is one of the most prosperous countries in the world. The private wealth of the one-and-a-half million people is estimated at 720 millions and the public wealth at another 170 millions. Income tax is not payable on less than £210 per annum, but 7,200 people paid tax on £28½ millions of income. Savings bank deposits, which are the small man's hoardings, amount to £76 millions. The Dominion is as sound a business proposition as anyone could desire, and Mr. Mackenzie is aware of the fact.

The people of the Dominion are rather too honest to deal with some of the situations in which they will find themselves and, what is worse, they are loyally devoted to their ideal of "the Mother Country." While F.B.I. is planning to jeopardise the security of the Dominion, its Government is making careful preparations for the repayment of interest and loans due in the City of London. New Zealand feels that if it is to meet its current debts it must curtail imports and foster home industries. In other words, British industry must go without a few of the extra millions of annual trade it has lately been enjoying in order that the British financier may receive his dues.

The campaign from the F.B.I. coincides with the tactics of the City of London, which has for some time been depreciating New Zealand stocks. Two closely related groups of British capitalists are simultaneously carrying out a policy of aggression against the Dominion. Ironically enough, they are both ruining each other's chances.

There are some unpleasant consequences to this campaign, which will fall first and foremost on the English people. If the Labour programme fails or gets into difficulties the demand for British goods will fall by about ten or twenty millions annually, it may not be possible for the Government to pay the ten millions annual interest on British Loans, New Zealand stocks will fall, to the detriment of the English bondholder, and the last dire effect would be the repudiation of the public debt of 160 millions held in London. Those are the inevitable results of the capitalist policy if successful. The price of wrecking a sound Socialist programme is costly and will be paid for by the British investor.

The effect of such treatment on the temper of the New Zealand people is not easy to judge. At the moment the Dominion is the most loyal supporter of England and Empire, and the policy of the Labour Government is inspired by the same ideal. Needless to say the campaign will do its best to discredit Socialism, but the average New Zealander is not a fool and the Labour Party in waking up to the methods of high finance is making public its interesting discoveries.

New Zealand's attitude to foreign affairs is not generally known because its press is in the hands of a Conservative minority, but the majority of the people have viewed with disgust the whole series of betrayals from Manchukuo to Munich, and have their own way of describing the policy of appeasement. As the public's faith in treaties disappears its alarm grows for its own safety. England knows she can count on New Zealand to the last man if necessary, but the Dominion is very dubious about her own position if attacked. These are hard facts; but the people of New Zealand are coming out of their Pacific isolation and beginning to realise the unpleasant possibilities of the future. New Zealand and the United States have a common interest in the Pacific, and it is known officially that there is a tacit agreement between them in the event of Japanese expansion there.

The British capitalist would do well to consider all the possible consequences of his action against New Zealand. So far his policy abroad has brought nothing but disaster to himself and his victims, and his short-sightedness would be incredible if it were not already a byword. If New Zealand finds itself in the dilemma which F.B.I. contemplates, it might cease to be a loyal member of the Empire. Mr. Macdonald has spoken of disruptive forces within the Empire which may disintegrate with a wave of the pen, and the Secretary for the Dominions need look no further than the City of London for the cause. If the British capitalist pursues his present policy he will inevitably sacrifice his friends and even the Empire to preserve his own social order. Just as capitalism built the Empire by exploitation, it may destroy the Commonwealth which can no longer be exploited. At the present moment New Zealand would be the last to desert the Empire; but if capitalism institutes its shock tactics the Dominion may be the first to make an escape from a capitalist dictatorship, because the New Zealanders believe in themselves, in their high standard of living and in their future, even if it is through the medium of Socialism.

M. CHILCOTT.

TEA

TEA has been in the news this week, and in Mincing Lane they have been celebrating the centenary of the first importation of Indian tea into England. I had no wish, I regret to say, to take part in the celebrations. I do not share Sydney Smith's gladness at not having been born before tea. Horace seems to have been fairly happy in a world that was ignorant of tea, coffee, and tobacco—drugs all but indispensable to the

modern man. To have been born before tobacco—some of us in hours of insight would regard this even as a boon. If I should not object to having been born before tea, however, this is not because I love it too well, but because the older I grow the more indifferent to it I become.

This is ungrateful, for I owe a great deal of happiness to tea. Among my earliest memories is that of my old nurse setting the coal-fire alight in the room in which I slept and putting on the kettle for her morning tea. Tea will always be associated for me with the brightness of those flames, heralding a new day with its pleasures more convincingly than a sunrise. To a child there is always something exciting, or at least absorbing, in the spectacle of a fire being lit, and at that age one watches every detail of the process of the making of tea with a close attention possible in later life only to persons of genius. The opening of the door of the cupboard where the tea and sugar were kept, the singing of the kettle, the warming of the teapot, the sound of the tea being dug out with the spoon and thrown into the pot, the outpouring and in-pouring of boiling water, the pause to give time to the tea to draw, the filling of the cup, the stirring of the spoon—all these things were part of a morning ritual that to a beginner in life never lost its wonder. The good, strong tea, too, seemed to fill the world with its perfume. Life was worth living even on a winter day before the sun had risen.

In spite of the part tea plays in my earliest recollections, I cannot remember when I drank my first cup of tea. It must, I think, have been soon after I left the cradle, for I cannot recall a time when I was a milk-drinker. Milk—apart from its use for the purpose of what the Americans call " dunking "—I disliked even in the nursery, and I was never forced to take anything I disliked. Tea, on the other hand, was something for which, when it was once tasted, the very soul seemed to thirst. I could have understood even as an infant the feelings of the old Irish beggar woman in Mr. James Stephens's sketch who, as she awoke from her sleep in a ditch, stretched herself and moaned : " I wisht I had a cup o' tay. I wished to God I had a cup o' tay." Everyone who has loved tea must have experienced that profound spiritual longing. " Yearning " is, perhaps, a more descriptive word. The only meal for which I cared greatly were meals at which tea was served. Dinner was merely a means of satisfying hunger, and I could have gone without meat with no sense of privation. But tea, with its accompaniments of buttered toast—" wet toast " my nurse called it to distinguish it from dry—and jam, was always an intoxication. If I had gone on having late tea instead of those prosy meat dinners, I should probably still look on it as the one perfect meal of the day.

To enjoy tea to the full, however, I discovered while still young that one should pour it, almost boiling hot, from the cup into the saucer and drink it with appreciative noises. I learnt this while sitting in my grandfather's kitchen and watching a farm-labourer enjoying his tea. I had never seen a human being drinking tea with such whole-souled enjoyment, and, in setting myself to imitate him, I made my first bid for independence and offered my first challenge to convention-ridden society. It was not a success. Common sense told me that saucers were meant to be used as the farm-labourer used them and tea actually tasted better when drunk out of a saucer. But I got as little support from any of my elders as I should have got if I had taken to breaking the Sabbath. One of my uncles even, seeing me bending my head to drink tea from a saucer on the table, put his hand on the back of my head and thrust my face down into the saucer, laughing as though he had made a good joke. In time I submitted, but never till the present day have I been able to see why drinking tea out of a saucer should be regarded as an offence. Can any country be called free in which the citizen is not free to drink tea out of a saucer if he pleases? It is a question to which philosophers might well give their attention.

Much better would it have been, it seems to me, to leave me free in this matter than to allow me to fill my cup with lumps of sugar. I may occasionally have been content with two or three lumps, but how often have I taken eight or ten or even twelve with a single cup of tea! After leading this life of excess for some time, I had to go to bed with an attack of jaundice. That attack of jaundice, I am convinced, saved my life. But for it I should have died long ago of sugar-poisoning. I also owe it to jaundice that I came to enjoy tea as it ought to be enjoyed for it left me with an antipathy to sugar and I never injured the flavour of tea with it again.

To-day, however, tea, even without sugar, has lost most of its flavour for me. Except when staying at the houses of friends, I regard early morning tea as merely an unwarrantable interruption of morning sleep. I drink tea with breakfast, but without any sense of its deliciousness, for it is only China tea not the old Indian that had a bite in it. There was a time when, if anyone brought in tea at almost any hour of the day my heart beat faster with anticipation. Tea at irregular hours seemed even more soul-reviving than tea at meal-times. To-day, however, when in the houses of certain of the Australians, the New Zealanders and the Irish, I am offered tea at almost any hour of the day up till midnight—especially, indeed, at midnight—my heart makes none of the old response. I find that I can refuse a cup of tea as easily as an invitation to deliver a lecture. I say this, however, in no boastful spirit. The loss, as every Australian and New Zealander will admit, is mine.

Perhaps, I was never a tea-drinker of the right kind. That early habit of filling the cup with sugar suggests that, as regards tea, I lacked taste from the beginning. Again, if I had been a true tea-lover, I feel I should have realised the importance of putting the milk into the cup before the tea or, alternatively, of putting the tea into the cup before the milk. Those who know good tea from bad argue hotly about such matters. I have never been able to take part in the argument, for I cannot, and never could, detect the slightest difference of flavour between a cup of tea made on the milk-first principle and a cup made by one of the tea-first school. Nor do I care whether the tea is made in an earthenware pot or in a silver; it all tastes alike to me. China cups I like for their appearance, but, for enjoying the flavour of Indian tea of the right strength, I should prefer—in so far as I have any preference—a mug of thick delf. Such confessions will sound to many people as blasphemous as a confession that one does not like dogs. But I have no wish to be received into the homes of my friends on false pretences, and they may as well be warned that, in admitting me, they are welcoming a man who is indifferent to tea.

What, I wonder, is the explanation of this indifference? I suspect the habit of meat-eating has something to do with it. This wretched habit of eating meat at lunch and meat at dinner spoils the taste of anyone but an Antipodean for the finer things of life. It is a general rule, I fancy—or, at least, I will set it down as one—that those who love tea most are those who eat least meat. It is universally said that the best tea in the world is bought by the Irish who probably eat less meat than any other people in the West of Europe. I have always accepted this statement without trying to verify it, but how strange, if it is true, that none of the Irish poets has ever celebrated tea in verse! Is there any national song about it comparable to " The Roast Beef of Old England "? Yet the teapot has been the poor man's friend, his comforter, for generations, and tea and its fragrance have probably moved him to reveries as deep as ever did the Celtic twilight or the aspect of holy hills.

Would that I could share such moods under such an inspiration. I think I may have written before of the finest example of the right, the reverent, attitude to tea I have ever known. During a holiday in Ireland, a friend and I went into a cottage near a holy well in search of a cup of tea. The old woman who lived in the cottage gave us chairs in the kitchen, and, having heated the enormous teapot, began to

pour spoonfuls of tea into it. When she did not stop after the third spoonful, we told her that we did not care for strong tea and that that was enough. She replied grimly, as she went on ladling the tea in: "I'll make it good. You can spoil it for yourselves"; and she did not desist till she had seven teaspoonfuls in the pot. Tea-making was to her, it was clear, an act of piety, and tea a thing to be honoured with perfect service. I have always felt that, of all the people I have ever met, she most truly appreciated good tea and loved it. How I envy her her felicity every day as I sit down in a mood of perfect indifference to my pallid afternoon brew! Y. Y.

Miscellany

COUNTRY NOTES

AN elegant pamphlet written by a Mr. Cornell in 1814 brought me some warming thoughts on a cold morning. The title in itself was genial: *A treatise calculated for making excellent wines from the various fruits of this United Country, in relation to strength, brilliancy, health and economy.* It had distressed Mr. Cornell that "so many a Mr. and Mrs. Bull" should be hoaxed with foreign wines, which were not only exorbitantly expensive but perniciously doctored, when such wines as juniper, wortleberry, cowslip, mead, and metheglin could be made in the still-room and matured in the cellar. The author approaches his subject with a suitable reverence; vinous fermentation, to him, is "a divine operation which the Omniscient Creator has placed in our cup of life"; the idea that wines should not be given fair play, but should be drunk before they have attained their full beauty, strength and fragrance, rouses him to indignation. How, he asks, can individuals expect their wines to be good and generous if drunk in such improper circumstances? When, however, he hears the seething in his own vats (in which he has been careful to place a mysterious object he calls a huc-muc) his satisfaction is such that he can relieve his feelings only by a homely comparison: it is puffing and blowing, he says, like our old cart-horse.

At last the great moment arrived when he could invite a party of friends to celebrate his vintage of three hundred gallons. The company included the author's Aunt Hambleton, the sprightly Widow Conway, the Reverend Mr. Rubicund, Miss Wood, a young lady to whom the occasion was especially interesting as she was on the point of being led to the hymeneal altar by young Farmer Moam; and Miss Jurtina Meadows, whom Mr. Cornell "had dignified with the classic appellation of Sappho, since in her unbending moments she wrote stanzas terse and chastely sapphic."

They were all very gay. Miss Meadows especially appears to have been enjoying one of her unbending moments, for Mr. Cornell records that "a radiation was playing between mine and the blue eye of Jurtina," and towards the end of the evening it was she who observed that since the ancients did celebrate their vintages with dance and song, the moderns might well follow their example. She had brought her pedal harp with her; touching it now "with delicacy and Attic grandeur" she proposed a song from each in turn. The company being very ready to oblige, Mr. Grimston led off with *The Brave British Soldier*, followed by the Widow Conway with *I Sigh for a Husband at Sixty*, accompanying the stanzas with such sportive winks and blinks that a lover would have lowered her age full 20 per cent. Mr. Rubicund then sang *The Bower of Felicity*, not once, but twice, his nose by that time being highly tinged with purple. Aunt Hambleton tried next, but broke down; she "made an attempt to sing a little rural song, but her memory was not equal to her inclination," and Mrs. Moam, having neither pipe nor song, had likewise to be excused.

Jurtina came to the rescue. Fixing her host with her blue eye, she melodiously sang a little pastoral of her own composition in which the following verse occurred:

> How delightful his vineyard, his cot,
> Where rational amusements combine.
> Oh! how happy would indeed be my lot
> Could I say to myself, *He is mine.*

Lively, elegant Jurtina. She now proceeded to create Bacchanalian Personages: the Rev. Rubicund was High Priest, the ladies were Arcadian Nymphs, she herself was the Goddess Ariadne, and their host of course was enthroned as Bacchus in a great arm-chair decorated with ivy and laurel.

It was impossible, he said, to describe their mirth and glee. His cup was full (in more ways, I suspect, than one), when on bidding him good-night Jurtina embraced his hand with the tenderest affection, whispering in his ear, "Call me no longer Sappho, but your—Ariadne!" V. SACKVILLE WEST

THE MAKING OF A COMPOSER

THE old saying, *poeta nascitur non fit*, is sadly out of fashion to-day. This is an age of recipes, and almost everybody has a recipe by means of which a poet can be made, and the same is true of music. The average young musician is as greatly concerned about getting the right approach as is the young poet. Given that, he fancies, his route is clear and without insuperable obstacles. But there is a difference between the young poet and the young musician of to-day which requires statement, for its elucidation may be of help to both.

In the Autumn number of Mr. Geoffrey Grigson's very lively and entertaining periodical, *New Verse*, certain poets gave, in answer to a request to "commit themselves," their pronouncements upon the relationship between the poet and society.

Here is a striking feature which would be completely absent from a similar periodical having music for its subject in place of poetry. A serious and ambitious periodical for young composers would make itself ridiculous by asking them to "commit themselves" on social problems. What it would ask for instead, however, would be that they should commit themselves upon their theoretical standpoint. What was their theoretic dogma? they would be asked. Did they believe in the twelve-tone scale? Did they favour the introduction of quarter tones? Was the material of classical European music played out?

Now poetry is not without such questions, too; nor even literature in general. We have had such experimenters in material also. James Joyce, Gertrude Stein and numerous others have sought "new paths," as the musicians have; but so far musicians have never been asked or rather exhorted to make up their minds about Communism or Fascism or Mr. Chamberlain or Herr Hitler or Signor Mussolini before they put another note on paper, as the writers are. It is, therefore, legitimate to inquire whether this difference in attitude is justified or not. When the Editor of *New Verse* writes "Poetry has its finger in the crisis" we must not only ask "which finger?" and "what crisis?" but also what is wrong with music that it is ignored in "the crisis"? A musician might justly remark: "A crisis that does not refer to music is no real crisis for a musician." But a poet is not allowed to make this answer; he is told that every crisis is a crisis for poetry. Is this true? Incidentally, I may add that science is in the same position here as music. In no scientific journal are we told that Hitler or Franco, Chamberlain or Stalin represent a crisis for science.

I know that some moralists would affirm that the man of science should stop research unless he has a guarantee that the fruits of his research will not be used for destructive purposes. But who is going to give such a guarantee? And can one imagine any genuine scientist being induced to abandon his scientific work on such a specious plea!! Why then is the poet put in this invidious position into which there is no attempt to thrust other artists or scientists?

To answer this question is not easy. No philosopher dealing with the subject of aesthetics has, to my knowledge, made any satisfactory attempt to define and distinguish the boundaries of the several arts or to tackle the fundamental problem of their respective differences. Kierkegaard was of the opinion that music was the most abstract of the arts, and this would probably be the general opinion. It is certainly true that no Commissar or Fascist agent entering a concert hall would be able to decide by listening to a symphony what were the political ideas of the composer. But this, in my opinion, is due to the fact that music, like mathematics, deals with universals and not with particulars. But if we consider the medium or material of the several arts, then we might say that the medium of literature—words—is more abstract than that of music, painting, sculpture and architecture because it is more purely symbolic.

Words, however, unlike tones or shapes and colours, have an inescapable deference to things. Things can be dealt with on many different levels. The question, "At what time does the train go?" is dealing with things but not on a poetic level. One might say that the use of words to give information has nothing to do with poetry, as similarly the use of tones to describe or the use of colours and shapes to imitate has nothing to do with the arts of music and painting.

The *fact* that a composer is also a man, a husband, a lover, a father and a voter is irrelevant to his art as a musician, although his experience as such may perhaps enter into his music. Even this is doubtful. The important thing about an artist is his gift; he is only an instrument of his gift, and what he expresses in his art is not his personal experience as a man or as a voter. It is even doubtful whether his gift can be influenced very much by the gift of others in his own art—which is what we should call education. I would advise music-lovers to go and hear Mr. Schnabel's recital of Schubert's pianoforte music at the Cambridge Theatre on Sunday evening the 15th inst. They will hear some of the subtlest and profoundest music ever written for the pianoforte, in which there is not a trace of any other composer's work. And let them remember that Schubert, who died at the age of thirty-one (the average present age of three young poets such as Auden, Spender and MacNeice who are so concerned with poetry and society in *New Verse*), had practically no serious musical instruction. I would hazard the guess that what is the matter with us poets is not that we have not yet made up our minds about Communism or Fascism—or any other subject under the sun—but just that we are not gifted enough!

If any scientist will tell me that he can produce poets more gifted than we are I shall await what he has to say with great interest.

W. J. TURNER

SURROUNDED BY CHILDREN

UNDER the shadow of the trees in Hyde Park the mothers are nursing the babies, and in the long grass of Kensington Gardens and on the banks of the Serpentine the sisters are caring for the brothers, under the trees the aunt walks. What is the aunt doing, under the trees walking? She is thinking of the young man who has the ice-cream vendor's cart; the cart of the ice-cream vendor is upon the road, he is peddling briskly away from the walking aunt.

The brothers of the sisters and the babies of the mothers have no care at all; theirs is a careless fate, to be pampered and cared for, no matter if there is no money the brothers will have the sisters to jump around after them, the babies will have the mothers to nurse them, the aunt will have the pleasure of sweet dreams under the tree and the ice-cream vendor will have his escape upon the saddle of his bicycle cart.

It is a pleasant English summer's day in the Gardens and in the Park. The brother of the sister has an ice-cream which he is eating, it is plastered upon his mouth, it is all over his whole face; he relishes the ice-cream. The sister anxiously combs back from her brow with long soiled finger the lank lock; she is worried to keep at the same time an eye upon the eater of the ice-cream and upon the younger brother who will paddle in the Serpentine, nobody shall say him no.

The little brothers and sisters who are the children of rich parents play also in the Park, but their play is watched by ferocious nannas. The children are fat and pink-cheeked but listless rather at their pleasures; their voices are the high-class English voices, the baby accents of the ruling classes, the clichés too, already they are there, a little affected is it not? and sad, too, that already the children are so self-aware almost already at a caricature of themselves—"we are having fun." "Did you enjoy your walk in the Park?" says Mama upon the child's return. "Why, yes, it was fun you know, just rather fun. Did we enjoy the walk Priscilla?" Priscilla sneers with tight lips above baby teeth. "Why yes, I suppose so, it was fun, rather fun."

Towards both these groups of children is now coming a famously ugly old girl, she has wisps of grey hair carelessly dyed that is rioting out from under her queer hat, as she walks she mutters to herself. Very different is the walking dream of the old girl from the walking dream of the love of the ice-cream vendor. Ah, upon the old girl is no eligible imagination for the nurture of a love-life of entertainment value. As she walks she talks, and also her hands that are delicate and long, like delicate long birds' claws, clasp the air about her. She fetches up to a standstill beneath the rich chestnut tree; in the shadow of the tree is reposed a grand pram for a rich child. The pram is empty but the covers are turned back. How invitingly securely rich is the interior of this equipage that is for a grand infant of immensely rich parentage, how inviting indeed the interior where the covers lie backwards upon the pram beneath the green tree!

The famously ugly old girl is transfixed by this seducing vision of an open and deserted perambulator, she will get into it, come what may that is what she will do, that is her thought. Her hands now stretch upward to remove the queer hat to fling it down upon the grass, the toque lies at her feet. Tearing apart the lapels of her tightly buttoned coat she will not wait, the flimsy bombazine tears, the coat is off; with one hand she props herself against the dear perambulator, kicks shoe from shoe, stands stockingfoot.

But now the children gather round, close in upon her fast, for what is going on here? The children of the rich parents and the children of the poor parents are now united in a childish laughter, the sisters of the brothers have forgotten their care, the nephews and nieces of the aunt are here, the rich children have escaped their nannas, laughing and staring they close in upon the poor old girl, they join hands and laugh.

"Ah," cries the sad beldame, transfixed in grotesque crucifixion upon the perambulator, stabbing at herself with a hatpin of the old fashion so that a little antique blood may fall upon the frilly pillow of the immaculate vehicle, "what fate is this, what nightmare more agaçant so to lie and so to die, in great pain, surrounded by children."

STEVIE SMITH

THE MOVIES

"Quai des Brumes," at the Academy (from Tuesday)
"Lone White Sail," at the Film Society
"The Refugee—To-day and To-morrow" (March of Time), at New Gallery, Astoria, New Victoria, etc.

Quai des Brumes is the best French film shown in this country since *Gribouille*; dramatically weaker than that admirable film, it is visually far more interesting. Marcel Carne, the director, and his camera-man (unnamed on the cast sheet) have that sense of rhythm, atmosphere and pictorial composition which is in no way incompatible with the talkies, but has in fact become rarer and rarer since their introduction. Not for some time has the pleasure of the eye been so con-

sistently and delightfully courted throughout a long film. The action (based on a story by MacOrlan) is confined to Le Havre and its neighbourhood. The very first shot—a lorry advancing towards us on a long poplar-lined road, headlamps gleaming on the wet surface—reminds us that the excitement of good cinema is after all humbly related to that of poetry; we enjoy the spectacle of familiar things seen through a sensitive and selective lens. After the hard, shadowless arc-lamp glare of Hollywood, the subtle lighting and variety of tone in *Quai des Brumes* are particularly welcome. It is true that rain and mist are naturally photogenic, but the camera does not rely exclusively on such effects: there is, for example, a moment when the hero, standing at a window on the top floor of a quayside hotel, looks down on the raw sunshine and incipient bustle of very early morning. And the photographer takes as much trouble over his interiors as a painter: out of a tablecloth, a glass and a loaf of bread he makes a good composition. Discreet use of music heightens the pictorial effect, as when a slow left-to-right wipe replaces the road scene with a cabaret exterior; the pulse of the dance band inside keeps time with the twinkling lights, and the simultaneous crescendo of light and music is exquisitely adjusted.

The plot of *Quai des Brumes* is hardly firm enough to support the emotional climax; on the other hand, the acting is superb. Jean Gabin is a deserter who wanders through the film as though he had something worse than that on his conscience. In Le Havre he is befriended by a drunk who takes him to a remote *buvette*, and here he meets the enchanting Michèle Morgan, ward of a sinister and degraded guardian with a passion for sacred music (in this part Michel Simon gives a fine performance in the vein of Laughton, but less flamboyant). The nature of the guardian's quarrel with an unpleasant trio of young men is rather obscure, and the audience is kept in the dark too long for a film whose virtue does not lie in mystification. But *Quai des Brumes* will long be remembered for the acting of Michèle Morgan and Jean Gabin, and for the skill and beauty of its photography.

Lone White Sail is a Russian *Emil and the Detectives* which deserves as great a success as the German film. It is based on a novel by Valentin Kataev which, as a reviewer in this journal remarked, cried out to be filmed; luckily the author has made his own scenario, and the result is a model adaptation. It is a lighthearted pendant to *Potemkin*, which describes the escape of a member of the Potemkin's crew and his efforts to break the police cordon and return to Odessa. In the film, as in the book, it is two children who turn the tables on the straw-hatted police spy and help the sailor to freedom; they are Petya, a schoolmaster's son, and his great friend, the brave and resourceful ragamuffin Gavrik. The director, Legoshin, has succeeded brilliantly in presenting everything from a child's point of view: sometimes people passing in the street are seen only from the waist down. Propaganda is almost absent: Petya, though not so bright as Gavrik, is no less resolute in the face of danger, and there are several sympathetic bourgeois characters and a grand old swindling fisherwoman. The film is full of incidental humours and good small-part acting; while the broad-faced freckled urchin who plays Gavrik is a match for Messrs. Bartholomew and Rooney and the six Dead End Kids put together.

The Film Society also showed a valuable film produced by Mr. Ivor Montagu, showing the prodigious educational effort now being made in Government Spain. A population which the Monarchy left more than 50 per cent. illiterate is being taught to read and write in the factories and trenches. The Spanish Government, despite the war, is spending about twenty times as much on new schools, teachers and general education as King Alfonso's Government thought desirable in peace time. There was also a respectable, if not very exciting, film about public education in Scotland.

The latest *March of Time* issue is perhaps the most important they have yet produced. It simply states the facts about the homeless victims of war and racial persecution; indeed, in the case of China it understates them, talking of "over a million Chinese refugees," when the true figure is somewhere near thirty millions. The greater part of the film shows the barbarism now practised in Germany, and has the courage to speak of "intolerance and persecution unparalleled since the Dark Ages." "For no greater crime than being born a Jew," the commentary continues, "thousands of men have been subjected to an inhuman existence in Nazi concentration camps, where they are herded as animals, and fed worse than animals." This can be news to few, but the *March of Time* reaches thousands who forget what they read but not what they see and hear, and the producer and the Censor are to be congratulated upon making possible a wider diffusion of the truth. Whatever one's views about Palestine, one cannot fail to be impressed by the photographs of Jewish colonisation which conclude this excellent film; after so much mania and futile destruction, these clean, white, airy buildings and the order and fertility of the surrounding farms seem like a promise of Utopia.

PETER GALWAY

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Candida," at the Actors Theatre

When the stately homes of the drama—Daly's, the Empire, the Alhambra, the London Pavilion—are invaded one after the other by the *nouveau riche* Movie industry, the drama itself perks up, finding in less fashionable districts new homes suited to its reduced circumstances. The Torch Theatre in Belgravia is winning a reputation, and last week we found in Hammersmith Grove a theatre, run as a club, which deserves to be better known. Every week it has a different play, providing young playwrights and actors with practical experience. The production of *Candida*, by Miss Shelah White, was extremely enjoyable. Shaw wrote it, over forty years ago, as "a modern pre-Raphaelite play," and it would be better played in costume. The poet, with his talk of archangels and their purple wings, belongs to the Yellow Book. Shaw, incidentally, is never very happy when he tries to be poetical. But this play shows all the arts of the orator, and conveys, moreover, a warmth of feeling rather rare in its author's work. The parson, his wife, his secretary and the poet all convince us that their emotions are genuine—this is the kindest of Shaw's plays. The actors, all very young, were surprisingly good, though suffering obviously from under-rehearsal. Miss Brenda Morriston had all the sincerity and niceness of Candida, but gave her too little glamour—Candida should not seem as sensible as she is. Her performance was intelligent and direct. Mr. Lionel Stevens, looking inevitably rather too young, made an excellent and convincing Morel, unmistakably a parson but never a caricature of a parson. Mr. Terance Noble gave a good character sketch as Burgess, and Miss Eileen Adams was effective and indeed moving as Prossie. (A tendency to over-act spoiled her drunk scene.) But the chief difficulty of producing *Candida*, as Shaw points out in his preface, is to find the right Eugene—a part in which Mr. Glen Farmer gave the best performance of the evening. He succeeded in revealing the poet's toughness behind the *façade* of charm and fragility. He was sensitive without being effeminate, and emotional without being ham. Mr. Joe Mitchenson did all that could be done with the unnecessary part of Morel's curate. Altogether an enjoyable evening.

The Eumorfopoulos Collection

This Saturday, January 14th, Mr. George Eumorfopoulos is hospitably opening his house, 7 Chelsea Embankment, from 10 to 4.30 in aid of the Chinese Universities Relief Fund. Not long ago the Victoria and Albert and British Museums acquired from him a vast and magnificent assembly of Chinese works of art. But he still possesses (and is continually augmenting) a rich, various and most beautiful collection. Han bronzes, Buddhist statues, Tang horses and dancers, the superlatively delicate porcelain of the Sung period, choice specimens of Ming virtuosity, Persian ceramics no less beautiful than the Chinese, Islamic and Roman glass, Byzantine ivories, French enamels, paintings by Picasso, Matisse, Rouault, Modigliani and some of the best English painters, modern sculpture—Mr. Eumorfopoulos's catholic taste and keen discernment have brought together lovely things from every period. Such treasures are far easier to enjoy in a private house than in a museum, and it is a great privilege to be able to

see them by giving half-a-crown to a most excellent cause. The Japanese, forgetful of all they have learnt from China, are seeking to destroy the most aesthetic of civilisations at its roots, the Universities.

Sir Francis Rose, at the Mayor Gallery

Miss Gertrude Stein, it is known, will have her joke, but the introduction she has written to Sir Francis Rose's exhibition is, no doubt unintentionally, a most unfair handicap to a young painter. It is difficult not to be prejudiced against these pictures by the silly assertion that this is the first English artist "who makes the colours English people love by painting," and "the most important painter among the young painters painting to-day." In fact, Sir Francis Rose has a pleasant gift for making coloured drawings of houses and interiors, in a style eminently suited to illustrations for *Harper's Bazaar*. In his more ambitious pictures he shows the influence of Bérard. His gift, though slight and far from original, is fanciful and rather charming, but his most conspicuous quality is *chic*.

THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, January 13th—
G. Tillotson: "Remarks on 18th Century Literature," 9 Gt. Newport Street, 8.
Laurence Housman will give a reading from his own works, Dick Sheppard Centre, 52 Queensway, 8.30.

SATURDAY, January 14th—
The Entertainment Industry of Britain is to-day giving 10 per cent. of its takings to Lord Baldwin's Fund for Rufugees.
Mr. George Eumorfopoulos's private art collection on view at 7 Chelsea Embankment, 10–4.30, in aid of Chinese Universities Relief Fund.
Left Book Club Ball for Relief of Victims of Fascism, Suffolk Galleries, 8.

SUNDAY, January 15th—
C. E. M. Joad: "The Controversy About Pacifism," Conway Hall, 11.
Schubert Recital by Artur Schnabel, Cambridge Theatre, 8.30.

MONDAY, January 16th—
Artists' International Association Exhibition: "Britain To-day," Toynbee Hall, till January 28th, 11.30–7, Sats. 11.30–5.
Little Plays of St. Francis, University College. Till January 21st.

TUESDAY, January 17th—
Laurence Housman: "Wrong Sizes," Friends House, 1.20.
Dr. Felix Tietze: "Eugenic Measures in the Third Reich," Royal Society, 5.15.
Herbert Read will speak at opening of Exhibition at Ozenfant Academy, 170 Warwick Road, W.14, 6.
Freda Utley: "China," Morley College, 8.
Conference on "Marriage Loans," Caxton Hall, 8.
Prof. C. D. Broad: "The Present Relations of Science and Religion," University College, 8.15.

WEDNESDAY, January 18th—
J. Strachey: "Marxism and the Liberal Tradition," Conway Hall, 8.
B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra Concert, Queens Hall, 8.15.

THURSDAY, January 19th—
Pat Sloan: "Communist Party of the Soviet Union," 153 Finchley Road, 8.15.
Concert in aid of Spanish Relief, Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute, 8.15. Tickets 1s.
Señora d'Alvarez: Recital of Spanish Songs, Aeolian Hall, 8.30.
"They Walk Alone," Shaftesbury.

FRIDAY, January 20th—
Erich Mendelsohn, "Rebuilding the World," Central School of Arts and Crafts, Southampton Row, 7.30.
"Murder in the Cathedral," production by Adelphi Group, St. George's Church, Bloomsbury, 8, and on Sat. Adm. free.

Correspondence

DEMOCRACY AND THE ARMY

SIR,—In your questions to Mr. Winston Churchill in last week's NEW STATESMAN AND NATION there was one I consider unfair to the regular officers, both of the war period and the present time. During, and previous to, the war, regular officers were drawn from a very much larger class than you seem to realise—witness Sir William Robertson—and at the present time it is possible for any young man, of sufficient intelligence, to obtain a commission.

As regards the general intelligence of regular officers, I may point out that up to the rank of Major they have to pass examinations before receiving promotion, and after that rank promotion is by selection on ability only. The entrance examination to the Staff College, Camberley, is extremely difficult—well above the capacity of the average man in any profession.

In criticising the shortcomings of our leadership during the war, one has to remember that that of the other combatants was no better. I should also like to emphasise that in most cases our mistakes were due largely to the failure of succeeding Governments to provide the army in peace-time with sufficient means to train the generals and staff in the movement and control of large bodies of men; in spite of that, the feeding and clothing of the army was superior to that of any other nation.

That the generals had to gain their experience on the field of battle at the expense of lives instead of money was not their fault, and that they did profit from this may be learnt from Haig's masterly alteration of Foch's original strategic design for the offensive after August 8th, 1918, which finished the war in that year instead of 1919.

Referring to the use of cavalry in the war, I would point out that this was used with great effect, not only in Palestine and Syria, but also on the Western Front; to give one instance only, during the March, 1918, retreat. That it is still considered to be of use on the Continent is proved by the retention of horsed cavalry in both the German and French armies.

In fact, sir, it seems to me that ill-informed criticism has a very bad effect on recruiting, in that it gives the would-be recruit or officer the impression that on joining the army he will either be badly led in war-time, or subjected to supercilious snobbery from his fellow-officers; whereas actually the army is one of our most democratic institutions, as, in few professions, are the rank and file so closely in touch, both in work and play, with those in authority over them. What our army suffers from, as it has for a long time, apart from a short period under Lord Haldane, is the lack of an army policy.

The Government should decide exactly what is required from the army in time of war. The War Office should then say what it would require in men and material to perform this duty, and these requirements should be provided as soon as possible without interference from the Treasury.

In conclusion, sir, I feel that if most people in this country would get their knowledge of military affairs from reading experts instead of novelists, they might get a better understanding of the army's difficulties, but one should also remember that we share a common fault with the Irish, that is, an inability to forget Oliver Cromwell.

G. M. BAYLISS

Staples,
Datchworth, Hertfordshire.

FRANCE AND DEMOCRACY

SIR,—I have received a copy of the following letter that was handed to Mr. Chamberlain when he passed through Paris by the Union des Intellectuels Français pour la Justice, la Liberté et la Paix:

"Dear Mr. Prime Minister,

At this time, when you are passing through our country, the intellectuals of France wish to express to you their deep sympathy with British democracy, to which we are united by memories of a recent struggle, a common love of liberty and a community of ideals.

The intellectuals of France do not presume to formulate an opinion about the visit that you are about to pay to Signor Mussolini. But they note that this visit is taking place at a moment when Fascist Italy dares to make unheard-of claims on Jibuti, Tunis, Corsica and Savoy, and when Italian divisions are fighting, in Spain, a heroic people whose only crime is to desire, like the British people, like the people of France, to remain free.

The intellectuals of France urgently beg you to bear in mind that French republicans are unanimous in their considered determination not to capitulate to new threats from the totalitarian States, and to defend the territory, the rights and the ideals of France against all Fascist menaces. They are no less determined to prevent Germany and Italy from seizing the Spanish peninsula and the Balearic Islands. They consider, indeed, that such a seizure, entailing the encirclement of France, would give the signal for a general war which would expose millions of British and French people to death.

They are grateful to you for having approved of President Roosevelt's declaration, with which they unreservedly associate themselves:

The Democracies . . . cannot for ever let pass without effective

protest acts of aggression against sister nations, acts which automatically undermine all of us.

Convinced that peace can only be preserved by a clear and firm 'No' to totalitarian States when they attempt to violate international justice, the intellectuals of France ask you to make known to Signor Mussolini that Republican France, which is as patriotic as it is pacific, rejects unanimously the mad demands of Fascist Italy and that, far from envisaging the granting of belligerent rights to the rebel Franco, she insists that the Italian troops fighting in Spain be immediately withdrawn.

Certain that we are in full accord on all these points with British democracy, and no less certain that only the cordial and vigilant union of all nations opposed to Fascist aggression can save the peace of the world, the undersigned beg to assure you, Mr. Prime Minister, of their sincere respects for Their Majesties, the King and Queen of England, for yourself and for the great and friendly people whom you represent."

JEAN PERRIN (Nobel Prize) IRÈNE JOLIOT-CURIE (Nobel Prize) FRÉDÉRIC JOLIOT (Nobel Prize)
ALBERT BAYET PAUL LANGEVIN
For Intellectual Liberty, MARGARET GARDINER, Hon. Secretary
23 Haymarket, London, S.W.1.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN AND THE POPE

SIR,—It is to be sincerely hoped that Mr. Chamberlain's visit to the Pope will lead to a clear statement of the Catholic Church's attitude as regards the Spanish War. It is, for example, impossible to believe that the Vatican gives all its support to the Insurgents and ignores loyal Catholics on the other side like the Basques; nor can one credit it that the Pope approves the strong Nazi tendencies of Franco's phalangist supporters. Yet these are the conclusions we are apt to reach if we accept the statements made by even leading lay Catholics in this country. Plain words by the Pope at this time might well save Spain from further bloodshed—and ultimately save the peace of Europe.

Religion has regained its status in Republican Spain, and none but the extreme Fascist could even pretend that the "Red" element has any influence to-day. The time is ripe for the Pope to call the Spanish peoples together to settle their differences.

69 High Street, Marylebone, W.1. V. R. H. AUSTIN

"SECONDARY EDUCATION FOR ALL"

SIR,—While we are praising the wiser of the recommendations in the Spens Report, and wondering somewhat gloomily when they may have a chance of being carried into effect, we should not overlook the fact that just such a reorganisation of secondary education as is now suggested for England was initiated by the Popular Front Government in France over two years ago. The scheme, known as "*L'Ecole unique*," makes elementary and secondary education successive stages in the progress of each child, not parallel systems divided on a class basis, one for the working class, the other for the middle class child. Every child receives "*enseignement du premier degré*" until the age of eleven, when he or she passes to "*enseignement du second degré*," either in the *lycées* or *collèges*, which have an "academic" bias, or in other schools (of equal status) with a "technical" bias: and the whole is free.

"*L'Ecole unique*" originated many years ago in the minds of progressive educationists in France; it had to wait for a Popular Front Government before it was realised. Perhaps, then, here is yet another reason why we should work for a Popular Front Government in this country, so that under its control we may achieve "Secondary Education for All." SCHOOLMAN

SIR,—There will almost certainly be a large measure of agreement with the majority of the contentions put forward in the article on the Report of the Consultative Committee on secondary education which was published in your last issue. Many will, however, take exception to the criticism of secondary, or, as the report designates them, Grammar Schools which is implicit in that report. It is stated that these schools are committed, for three main reasons, to an ultra-academic or traditional as opposed to a vocational policy, and for that reason it is desirable to create a new type of secondary school by elevating the present Junior Technical schools to that status. In point of fact, however, the

Our Net Sales

HALF-YEAR, JULY 1 to DECEMBER 31, 1938

WE have examined the Books and Accounts of The Statesman and Nation Publishing Company Limited and certify that the average Net Sales per issue of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION during the period 1st July 1938 to 31st December 1938 after deducting all free and voucher copies and returns received during the same period and arrived at in accordance with the formula prepared by the Audit Bureau of Circulations, Ltd., were

26,865 copies

IN ADDITION to this average of 26,865 copies there has been over the same period a weekly average sale of 2,135 introductory subscription copies at a reduced rate making a

total weekly net sale of 29,000 copies

over the half-year under review.

January 6, 1939
19a, Coleman Street, E.C.2.

(*Signed*) HAMILTON EDDY & ROWAND,
Chartered Accountants.

development of scientific instruction has been among the most prominent features of twentieth-century secondary education, and the fullest provision is now made for this great group of subjects in secondary schools whether new or old, independent, aided, or maintained. From this point of view, therefore, the effect of the new recommendations is bound to be to a certain extent retrogressive. Much that has been done in this connection will necessarily be rendered nugatory if the power to continue their work is transferred from the existing schools to new educational establishments. By all means free secondary education from the trammels of the examination system, and open the doors wide so that all may enter. But why call in a new world, when the old is both able and anxious to redress its balance? Why emulate those of our forefathers in whose eyes the greatest influence for good in childhood was the shadow of the workshop walls?

Croydon. RONALD GURNER,
(Master, Whitgift School)

LORD MAYOR'S CZECH FUND

SIR,—I should be interested to know the evidence on which you base the statement in your last issue that the 4,000 German democrats "housed at present in deplorable conditions in Czechoslovakian camps . . . have been inexplicably excluded from the benefits of the Lord Mayor's Fund."

I have recently returned from Prague, where I have had first-hand experience of a large number of camps, in some of which I have been interviewing Sudeten women for the Domestic Bureau. These women have had the opportunity of a training course in Domestic Science, which, together with board and lodging in Prague, has been supplied at the expense of the Lord Mayor's Fund. The Fund has also undertaken to pay their fares to England and has supplied them with English books. The conditions in the camps are in many cases still very bad, and ordinary necessities have arrived, and are arriving, far too slowly, but it is hardly accurate to say that the German democrats have been excluded from the benefits of the Lord Mayor's Fund, which, to my certain knowledge, has supplied bedding, medical necessities, and winter clothes in a large number of the camps I have visited.

This may seem a small point to raise in comparison with the importance of your general comment, with which I entirely agree; but I think it important to do so (*a*) because misgivings as to the expenditure of public funds tends to discourage subscribers; (*b*) because the problem of German democrats is so urgent that it is essential that accurate information should be available.

It is, of course, possible that the comment refers to some new ruling, which has come into force in the last week, but in that case the statement, as it stands, is ambiguous.

Langdale End, JEAN W. ROWNTREE
Hackness, Scarborough.

[We are glad to publish this correction of an unfortunate error in our Comment last week. The Lord Mayor's Fund has been used already to bring 250 Sudeten German and 100 Reich German families from Czechoslovakia to this country as well as to give what relief is possible inside the country.—ED. *N.S.&N.*]

THE SERIOUS THEATRE AND ITS CRITICS

SIR,—As a director of the company now playing at the Westminster Theatre, I hope I have the right to add my comment to the dispute between Mr. Desmond MacCarthy and his anonymous colleague. (And I cannot help remembering the strange adventures a play of mine, *Time and the Conways*, had among your dramatic critics.) Now the question, as I see it, is not whether *Marco Millions* is a good play or a poor one. Actually, nobody pretends that it is a masterpiece. But I am prepared to maintain that you can have a better evening with our production of it, if you are an intelligent playgoer, than you can have at this time in most London theatres. And this view is held by the critics of the *Times, Telegraph, Manchester Guardian* and *Evening News*.

But this is the point. Because we have produced a play he does not happen to like, your critic accuses us of doing "great harm to the serious theatre." This seems to me a shocking piece of discourtesy on the part of a critic whose name we are not allowed to know. But it is more than that. It is to my mind an example of the kind of criticism that may soon put an end to the serious theatre in this country. In those of us who spend our time and money trying to keep this theatre alive, it induces a mood of deep despair. We feel like doctors, busy with oxygen cylinders and other desperate remedies, who suddenly find the sick-room invaded by an elegant gentleman who remarks bitterly that he hates the look of the patient's nose.

There are two things your critic should remember. The first is that the production of a play is not like a book. A book can be severely and unfairly criticised without much lasting harm being done, because there the book is, complete, and sooner or later it will circulate among the readers capable of enjoying it. We have all been warned off books that perhaps we found afterwards in a friend's guest room and read with pleasure. But nobody is going to find our production of *Marco Millions* in a friend's guest room. In another week or so, our production will have vanished, unlike the books that your critics have attacked. Does this mean that the dramatic critic must praise everything? Of course not. It does mean, however, that any production in which taste and intelligence have had some part, at a time when such productions are rare, should be treated with some consideration. Instead of screaming "Pretentious! Rubbish! Great harm to the serious theatre!" the critic might point out that he did not think much of the play, though others did, but that the production and acting were not without merit.

The second thing he should remember—and if he has never been aware of it then he knows so little about the contemporary theatre that he ought not to be a dramatic critic at all—is that the serious theatre in this country is still fighting for its very life. Now, if one had the choice of twenty dramatic masterpieces any night, if the whole country were theatrically minded, if the public or the State poured out money like water on the drama, then we should stand in need of the severest standards of criticism, the most piercing judgments, the most savage pens. But at the present time whenever your critic visits the serious theatre, it is ten to one he does it at the expense of a few generous souls who are determined that that theatre shall not die in our time. Thousands and thousands of pounds, to say nothing of all the time and energy, are given in order that your critic should have something to write about at all. And not only does he never say "Thank you," but he goes out of his way to be captious and patronising.

If your critic knows and cares more about the serious theatre than we do at the Westminster—as he suggests he does—then let him set to work and organise a permanent producing company here in London. (Nobody would wish him success more heartily than we would.) But if he succeeds in establishing his company, I venture to prophesy that he will be shocked by the strange grudging attitude that many people, who ought in theory to be sympathetic, will show towards his effort. And I hope he will keep his temper, as we are trying to keep ours.

3 The Grove, J. B. PRIESTLEY
Highgate Village, N.6.

[Our critic never suggested that he knew or cared more about the serious theatre than the Westminster Management, whose aims and whose past achievements he greatly admires. But he considers their present production likely to damage their reputation and to put the ordinary public against the serious theatre. If one doctor sees another administering chloroform by mistake for oxygen, it is his business to protest. Our critic still does not believe he would have done any service to anyone in recommending a play that he honestly found so uninteresting. Whether or not this particular play is tedious and pretentious must evidently remain a matter of personal opinion. But if in fact a play has these faults, would not Mr. Priestley agree that its production, however well meaning, was likely to do harm?—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

SIR,—I have not seen *Marco Millions*, but I am for once in complete disagreement with my friend Mr. MacCarthy and entirely on the side of your critic.

One of the crimes against education is that the young are not taught that no masterpiece can possibly be dull—were it dull it would not be a masterpiece. So many well-meaning enterprises firmly weld intellect to tedium, believing apparently that only where entertainment is lacking can thought be present. They are disinterested, but they cannot expect an equal degree of disinterest from their audience. Even the highest minded do not go out at night in order to pay to yawn. Good bad music is delightful, good good music is sublime, bad good music is intolerable and does harm only to good music.

The same is true of the theatre. A pretentious serious play will lose the intelligent playgoer. Presumably no producer could wish to find his audience united to him by a spirit of common sacrifice. ELIZABETH BIBESCO

THE PROBLEM OF THE TOWNS

SIR,—The recent crisis has again turned our attention to the consequences of the unpractical size of our towns. More and more people are coming to realise that London and other great cities are too large, and that their continued growth is making almost insoluble their problems of overcrowding, traffic congestion and inadequacy of open spaces. For many years it has been clear to town-planners that the only satisfactory policy, in the interests alike of industrial and business efficiency and of a good environment for family life, is one of decentralisation. To these sociological reasons has now been added the additional reason of safety from aerial attack. It is manifest folly to add further rings of development to towns already demonstrably too large, or to maintain or even increase their density.

For many reasons the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association has been advocating a practical policy of decentralisation of the great cities, coupled with the preservation of the countryside from sprawling or scattered development. On the technical and administrative side of the subject the Association, which has, of course, special advantages through its personnel and connections, has been making a constant and detailed study of all the relative problems and has put forward and endeavoured to popularise constructive proposals.

Now that immediate attention must be paid to the problem in the interests of safety as well as welfare, the need for the work of the Association is very great, and it is necessary to supplement it by more complete data as to the financial, statistical and technical aspects of the subject, as well as to maintain an effective propaganda for Planning and Decentralisation.

A few hundreds subscribed now may help to save the country very large sums in the future. Subscriptions will gladly be received by any of us at 13 Suffolk Street, Pall Mall, London, S.W.1.

The Garden Cities and Town Planning Association,
13 Suffolk Street,
Pall Mall, S.W.1.

LYTTON
CECIL HARMSWORTH
WALTER LAYTON
ARTHUR SALTER

HISTORY OF THE FILM

SIR,—Your film critic in his review of Bardèche and Brasillach's *History of the Film* remarks pertinently on the difficulties of the film historian in the absence of any means of studying the films which constitute his subject-matter.

The problem to which he refers has for some time now been a matter of concern to the British Film Institute, and one of the objects of the National Film Library, formed under the aegis of the Institute, is to meet this difficulty. A collection of old films already running into some millions of feet has already been acquired, mainly by donation, partly by purchase, and these are accessible for viewing by students of the subject. The Librarian is always glad to hear from those who have in their possession old films which might be suitable for addition to the Library.

As your reviewer makes special reference to the scarcity of certain periods of Chaplin's work he may be interested to know that the National Film Library includes thirty-two Chaplin subjects.

H. D. WALEY,
Technical Director

The British Film Institute,
4, Great Russell Street,
London, W.C.1.

THE INTERNATIONAL BRIGADE

SIR,—Nearly twelve thousand people crowded into Earls' Court last Sunday night to attend a memorial meeting for the 543 British members of the International Brigade who were killed in Spain. I am told that something like another two thousand turned up, for whom no room could be found.

Many of your readers were no doubt present, and they will testify that the occasion was unique and that it was conducted with a moving pageantry rare in this country.

Yet despite the tremendous public interest which the meeting aroused, three newspapers—all of which constantly boast of the adequacy of their news service—completely ignored it. They were the *Times*, the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Daily Mail*.

I submit, sir, that such a disregard for important news—and any competent News Editor will tell you that a meeting which can fill to overflowing the largest hall in London on a wet Sunday night is *news*—is a disgrace to British journalism. Newspapers are constantly warning their readers of the dangers of outside censorship and yet, here, for purely political reasons, we have a self-imposed censorship as reprehensible and damaging to the cause of freedom as any outside censorship could be.

PHILIP JORDAN

SPANISH RELIEF

SIR,—A confirmation of the seriousness for the children of the situation in Barcelona so eloquently described in your issue of January 7th by the Earl of Antrim has just been received from our medical adviser there.

She has sent us a telegram asking urgently for £800 worth of milk for the babies of Barcelona under two years old. The stocks of milk in Government hands, from which these infants receive the small weekly ration that just keeps them alive, have been completely exhausted by an emergency call from Madrid, and there will be a fortnight beginning this week during which no milk will be available for them.

A call like this could not go unanswered, and we have authorised the milk to be given out from our stocks which are ready for distribution next month. But if this is done now, and the babies' lives saved, others will go short unless it is replaced at once.

Can your readers help us to save these infants from starvation?

E. M. PYE,
Vice-Chairman

Friends Service Council,
Friends House, Euston Rd., N.W.1.

We are glad to acknowledge the following further sums for Spanish Relief: A German (£35)*; "Inverness" (£10); T. Charbonnier, J. G. S. Donaldson, J. H., R. J., A. T. Southall, D. W., W. H. Wale (£5); John FitzHerbert and Jeremy Ware (£3 7s. 6d.); Anon. (£3 3s.); Anon., M. I. F. (£2 10s.); Dr. I. Atkin, W. D. B., M. D. King (£2 2s.); Anon., R. Rutgers, Rev. Arthur W. Vallance (£2); Christine Holt (£1 16s.); Philip Brown, D. C., Mr. and Mrs. L. B. Gomme, P. Rainier (£1 1s.); Anon. (2), P. R. B., Dorothy Copland, E. L. F., H. H., B. and C. L., S. M., J. E. S. and M. I. S., Ann Shepherd (£1); D. M. Ormond (15s.); Anon. (12s.); Dr. P. (10s. 6d.); J. B. and M. E. P., Baby Geoffrey, Dr. S. C., B. S. C., J. Henderson, J. E. R. Little, P. M., S. Ockenden, Pamela Slater, E. W. Wignall (10s.); C. E. A. (7s. 6d.); H. R. S., M. H. S. (7s.); S.I.O. Members (6s.); Aros, N. P. C., K. F., A. K., R. J. McCullagh, F. V. Rhodes, D. M. Wills (5s.); N. C. P. (1s.). * (This £35 was sent anonymously. The covering letter, which bore no address, mentioned £40).

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Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

Caesar had his Brutus, the cotton has its bollworm, the chorus girl has her Pittsburger, the summer boarder has his poison ivy, the rose has its—

O. HENRY'S exponent of the theory of the Unerring Artistic Adjustment of Nature would have added, had he been an Englishman, that the virtuous heroine has her wicked Baronet. But when did Baronets become wicked? The reluctant and respectable country gentlemen on whom James I forced the dignity are unlikely to have made the seduction of female virtue their main business. I do not think there were wicked Baronets until after the Civil War, and I strongly suspect that Sir Charles Sedley was the original of the whole tribe. There are probably wicked Baronets mixed up with the mere Knights in a number of Restoration plays, for Sedley's friends would naturally write about him. Sir Frederick Frollick in Etherege's *Love in a Tub* was probably a Baronet, but it is not possible to be certain. Leaving the reader in uncertainty in this way is perhaps because people did not yet regard the distinction between a Knight and a Baronet as important. After a few generations Baronets came into their own. Sir Hargrave Pollexfen, who carried off Harriet Byron in a coach and six, we are told was a wicked Baronet, and he may be the first of his class in an English novel. Sir John Belmont, the father of Evelina in Miss Burney's novel, was another. Sir John had married Evelina's mother in Paris but had torn up her marriage certificate, had disowned her and refused to acknowledge the infant whom she had brought into the world shortly before she expired. His conduct both before and after Evelina's birth "would dye still deeper the black annals of Nero and Caligula." Evelina was brought up by a virtuous clergyman, who wrote to Lady Howard:

> Consider, Madam, the peculiar cruelty of her situation: only child of a wealthy Baronet, whose person she has never seen, whose character she has reason to abhor, and whose name she is forbidden to claim; entitled as she is to lawfully inherit his fortune and estate, is there any probability that he will properly own her?

In Jane Austen's burlesque novel, *Love and Friendship*, written at the age of seventeen, the romantic Laura writes about a Baronet's son:

> The noble youth informed us that his name was Lindsay—for particular reasons, however, I shall conceal it under that of Talbot.

Evelina's guardian, Mr. Villars, took the same wise precautions, and called her by the name of Anville; as such she was introduced into London society by Lady Howard's daughter, Mrs. Mirvan. In addition to the handicap of mysterious birth, Evelina's grandmother, who had been "a waiting woman at a tavern," and had afterwards married a Frenchman, arrives and introduces Evelina to a number of her relatives in low life. These troubles are the making of a charming and absurd novel.

* * *

The inclusion of *Evelina*, edited by Sir Frank Mackinnon, in the Oxford Bookshelf Series (Oxford, 5*s*.) is an event in publishing, for cheap reprints are too rarely provided with scholarly notes. There is great pleasure still to be got from *Evelina* purely as a story. *A History of a Young Lady's Entrance into the World*, as the sub-title describes it, starts off with her accounts of the appalling mess she made at the first two balls to which she was taken, by trying to avoid dancing with men whose faces she disliked, and accepting the perfect Lord Orville as a partner. Her grandmother gets hold of her, and when she meets Lord Orville again she is in the unfortunate company of her cousins:

> "Will Miss Anville allow me to ask her address, and to pay my respects to her before I leave town?" O how I changed colour at this unexpected request!—yet what mortification I suffered, in answering, "My Lord, I am—in Holborn!"

No passage shows better the change in what a heroine is supposed to feel. Evelina, who has to disguise so many of her strongest feelings, is not required to hide her class feeling as she would be to-day. Such incidents show that the value of *Evelina* as a story is now less than the pleasure to be got from its period flavour, from the forgotten conventions of what an eighteenth-century heroine ought to feel, how she should behave, and what she may permit herself to think amusing. To help one appreciate all these secondary pleasures Sir Frank Mackinnon's notes and appendices could scarcely be improved upon.

* * *

But the reader who approaches *Evelina* for the sake of the light Miss Burney throws on the manners and customs of different ranks of society in 1778 must be warned against accepting the book too literally as a piece of reporting. It is quite clear that Fanny Burney was for the most part drawing not from life but from books. It was stated by Macaulay that Dr. Burney's library contained no novel except Fielding's *Amelia*, but this is probably a mistake. Fanny had read Marivaux and Richardson. She was brought up in the midst of a brilliant circle of extremely cultivated and civilised men and women. Yet one of the characters dominating *Evelina* is a conventionally coarse sea-captain, whom it is absolutely impossible to imagine being allowed to carry out his bullying horse-play in any company which the Burneys can have frequented. Not only does Captain Mirvan dress up as a highwayman and throw Evelina's grandmother into a ditch, where she loses all her false hair, but he exultantly insults her whenever they meet in public. It seems obvious that Captain Mirvan is taken direct from Smollett, who first exhibited roughness, coarseness and brutality in the British sailor as amusing and partly admirable characteristics. All the scenes between Captain Mirvan and Madame Duval appear to me to be inspired by Smollett. There is a grand scene in which Captain Mirvan tells the fop Lovel that his brother is inquiring for him downstairs, and then leads a fashionably dressed monkey into the room which bites Lovel, who is advised by his friends to fight a duel but reveals himself in his true light as a coward. It is all pure Smollett. What proves the entire absence of realism in these scenes is the way in which the rest of the company are made to regard Captain Mirvan. She does not suggest that he is a bully who ought to be driven out of decent society—but treats him as a humorous "character" whose coarseness goes too far but is, in itself, amusing. It was the curious mixture of the authentic romantic young girl and this plain-dealing traditional horse-play which so delighted Doctor Johnson.

* * *

The notes and appendices of this edition are a pleasure in themselves, and are full of information about eighteenth-century London and its amusements which I have not come across anywhere else. In a note on "George's at Hampstead," Sir Frank Mackinnon describes a resort near the Spaniards in Ken Wood, which must have greatly resembled places still existing in Italy. There was a chair which dropped into the floor when a lady was induced to sit on it; contrivances with reptiles "so connected with mechanism as to make efforts of attack upon parties who unsuspectingly tread on a board or spring"; and waterworks which squirted the unwary. There was also a pillory in which a gentleman was put after which "the ladies are obliged to kiss him with such other oddities." Full accounts are given of "Don Saltero's" in Chelsea, of The Pantheon, Cox's Museum, White Conduit House, Bagnigge Wells, and Sadler's Wells. The note on the latter might have been brought up to date, as it ends somewhat lugubriously with a notice of an appeal for funds to rebuild it. Sir Frank Mackinnon's most important appendix deals with manners and customs. After stating: "I do not suppose that Evelina ever in her life called her husband by his Christian name. What it is is never revealed," he might have added that the custom of a wife only calling her husband by his surname still survives among the older generation of farm labourers. *Evelina* is important in one way I have not mentioned: it was one of the first novels to be written by a virtuous English woman.

DAVID GARNETT

NEW NOVELS

The Young Cosima. By HENRY HANDEL RICHARDSON. *Heinemann.* 7s. 6d.
There Needs No Ghost. By RUTH ADAM. *Chapman and Hall.* 7s. 6d.
Three Over the Frontier. By HANS HABE. Translated by ERIC SUTTON. *Harrap.* 8s. 6d.
Be a Gent, Little Woman, Be a Gent. By EILEEN WINNCROFT. *Lane.* 7s. 6d.
The Ridiculous Hat. By JOHN BROPHY. *Collins.* 7s. 6d.

Not long ago there appeared in London a play about Richard Wagner in which, I am told, the composer made his entrance carrying a bulky parcel, which he handed to his servant with the words: "Here is the score of my new opera, *Lohengrin*. Please place it with the others." Miss Richardson is never guilty of such a *bêtise* as this; those who have read her first novel, *Maurice Guest*, will know that she writes as one familiar with the world of music. Out of the famous and already dramatic Von Bülow-Cosima-Wagner episode she has made a gallery of recognisable characters whose movements she directs with the assurance of a practised novelist. It is evident that she knows her way about the enormous mass of sources and authorities which she prints at the end of her book. (Her giving the date of Cosima's birth as 1857 instead of 1837 is, by the way, an unfortunate misprint which will puzzle the uninformed reader.) Her equipment for the subject she has chosen is, in fact, admirable, nor will I grumble about the *genre*. There must be points in favour of fictionised biography, though it is difficult to remember what they are; at any rate, many readers like it, and a few good writers have used it. No; what kills *The Young Cosima* for me is the same defect that almost ruined *The Fortunes of Richard Mahony:* the quality of the writing.

Miss Richardson writes in a hearty but colourless style, packed with vulgarities and *clichés* that one had thought buried for ever. Every page bristles with things like "*horribile dictu*," "anew," "plain, unvarnished truth," "his nerves played him sorry tricks," "hotly she flashed back," and "the tall, resplendent figure of the young king." Minna Wagner, we read, did not "cotton to" Frau Wesendonk; Von Bülow, giving piano lessons, is said to be "drumming into more or less (mostly less) talented youths and maidens the technique of the ivories." It is true that novelists of great invention often write carelessly and mechanically, but no novelist has created characters which could survive the stilted melodramatic dialogue that Miss Richardson puts into their mouths. Here are a few specimens at random. Hans von Bülow to Cosima:

> Oh, infamy!—is there no end to it? No end this side of the grave?

Cosima to Hans:

> And pray, who but you taught me to love him?

Hans to Cosima:

> God in Heaven! Can a woman not love without—without . . .

Richard to Cosima:

> Hokum-pokum! And the sooner you shake yourself free of such medieval doxies the better.

Richard to Hans (in a letter):

> Huzza! that's the ticket! Go for 'em, boy, let 'em have it.

Richard to Minna:

> Trash to you! No, no, my dear, I'll be the songbird of the party—here, let's see if I'm in voice!

Richard to Minna:

> Dish up that dinner, wife.

This kind of talk, especially Richard's extraordinary expletives, recalls the style of the Australian trilogy; but phrases can be plausibly assigned to bushrangers which shock us on the lips of a particularly brilliant group of German intellectuals. I should not have devoted so much attention to *The Young Cosima* if exaggerated claims had not been made for its author. Gerald Gould called *Richard Mahony* a masterpiece "if our age has produced a masterpiece at all," Mr. Ernest Newman found it "one of the really big things in fiction," and Mr. St. John Ervine thinks "no living woman novelist in this country . . . fit to have her books put on the same shelf." Well, I know three, straight off the reel, whom I would put on a far, far better shelf.

It was inevitable that, when we had time for reflection, we should find our national behaviour during the September crisis exceedingly funny. Disproportion is the essence of humour,

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and the disproportion between our shovels and buckets and gummed-up windows and the facts of aerial bombardment needs no demonstration. Mrs. Adam has taken a village community in the south of England, and explored its reactions to the international situation as it developed between May and September. Most of the narrative is put into the mouth of the Vicar's sister, Miss Perry, a character who expresses amusingly and without much exaggeration the views of millions of the respectable English upper class :

> I understood then, and it proved what I had always known, that when you get ordinary working men, like Hitler and Mussolini, pushed up into being almost like the Royal Family, naturally they lose their heads, not being used to a position of that kind.

I have heard that sentiment in almost the same words in Warwickshire. Mrs. Adam does not forget the "gallant little Czechoslovakia" group, and includes a roadside conversation of the sort we all know so well :

> The fat man kept on saying he wasn't going to war for a lot of ruddy Czechs and then Philip would explain at great length that he would not be going to war for the Czechs at all, but for the ideal of liberty, and the fat man, after listening carefully, would say at the end that anyway he wasn't going to war for a lot of ruddy Czechs.

Out of our muddled and not wholly dishonourable reactions to the threat of war Mrs. Adam has constructed a brilliant entertainment ; and in the character of the pacifist schoolmaster tormented by the inexorable destruction of his most cherished beliefs she shows herself aware also of the serious implications of her theme. *There Needs No Ghost* is a book full of delicate observation and alive to the ridiculous and tragic predicament of a nation of well-behaved, humdrum people plunged without warning from the reign of Victoria into the reign of Nero.

Hans Habe's book opens with three exciting escapes from the Germany of 1933. Nora Geldern slips over the frontier into Czechoslovakia by the simple process of switching off the lights of her car (was this possible, even in 1933 ?) ; Dr. Kiesler, a millionaire who hates and despises his employees, smuggles his money past the guards : these two are Jews. The third refugee, a young Communist engineer, named Richard Sergius, is concealed beneath sacks of flour in a lorry. Herr Habe is good at these movie sequences, and he is even better at analysing the disintegrating depression, the jealousy and suspicion that inevitably flourish in a community of exiles. One has the feeling that he is almost too determined not to be propagandist, not to invite sympathy for his expatriates : Nora and Kiesler are an intensely unattractive couple, and the young Communist, who should by rights be the hero, only achieves, like so many fictional Communists, a kind of plaster cast, *Exposition* heroism. In fact, Herr Habe is better at social analysis than at people or plot ; it is difficult, for example, to believe in that odd Englishman, Vernon McCallum, and "his only well-to-do friend, the Earl of Dickinson."

There is much to be said against Miss Winncroft. Nearly all her sentences begin with "And" or "So." She is always making coy advances to her readers, who have to put up with this sort of thing :

> They had a small Christmas tree and the nurse (whom we will now call Susan, because we have got very intimate and friendly with her) . . .

and this :

> Rosemary in bed, complete with hot-water bottle and new bed-socks (nasty, coddled child, isn't she ?) . . .

On the other hand, her picture of a pair of married journalists living in a country cottage the disorderly life of the roaring 'twenties is most entertaining. In the child, Rosemary, she has created a masterpiece of horror who somehow remains human enough to become likeable at the end. Her young men are either incredibly weak and pretty or incredibly masterful and promiscuous, but her heroine, the "little gent" of the title, is real and delightfully unexpected. There are a lot of amusing comments on the world in general, something in the disillusioned, *terre à terre* manner of Miss Stevie Smith. I have the feeling that, when she develops a drier taste in fun, Miss Winncroft may write the most amusing novel of the lustre.

The Ridiculous Hat is the most professional of these novels, and there is something very satisfying about the professional touch. It is the simple anecdote of a respectable suburban Civil Servant who, feeling a little irresponsible on a spring night, gets into conversation with a girl in Regent Street. The girl is not quite a prostitute, and the Civil Servant doesn't quite sleep with her ; I know this will annoy many people who will call it a "typical English refusal to face facts," but their relationship seemed perfectly plausible all the same. The matter is rather slight for a full-length novel, but the handling of the plot is so neat and effective that one is never bored. An absorbing train book, and I mean that as praise because I always want to look out of the window.

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DANTE IN ENGLISH

Dante's Purgatorio. The Italian text with a translation into English Triple Rhyme by LAURENCE BINYON. *Macmillan* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Laurence Binyon deserves the greatest gratitude and admiration for this translation. He has achieved the almost impossible task of producing an accurate version of Dante in the triple rhyme of the original. I think that I can safely say that the English reader who knew no Italian and who read Mr. Binyon's version would get a true impression of some of the greatest merits of the original—clarity, accuracy of expression, above all a kind of translucency in imagery and the perfect conciseness of thought, which is emphasised by the triple rhymes which seem to be held over the pattern of thought and imagery like a triple lens of a microscope.

There is no rhetoric, no mighty vagueness in Dante : and the absolute fidelity of Mr. Binyon's method brings through the original like a tracing in black and white of a coloured painting. Sometimes the translator has to use paraphrase and inversion—though, on the whole, the directness of his translation is not the least of his triumphs—but he never fails to convey what Dante means. The only impurity, for a modern reader, of his rendering is the at times over-poetic vocabulary (the use of words like "mayhap," for example) ; but quite apart from the many reasons which might be put forward to justify a poetic vocabulary, in this instance it is essential, for the sake of rhyme alone, that Mr. Binyon should use as large a vocabulary as possible.

The tremendous task of translating the *Divine Comedy* (Mr. Binyon has already translated the *Inferno*) is the less rewarding,

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ROUTLEDGE : KEGAN PAUL

because there must be many people who would prefer either Cary's version in blank verse, or the excellent prose of the Temple Classics edition. To them, I would point out that Mr. Binyon's version has a great advantage for the reader who, like myself, reads Dante with an eye wandering from the Italian on the left-hand page to the English on the right: the transition from the triple rhyme of the Italian into prose or blank verse always comes as something of a shock, as though a double process of translation were going on in one's mind, from a foreign language and also into an entirely different mode. With Mr. Binyon's version there is no such difficulty: the English gracefully echoes not only the meaning but the effect of the Italian. One can read it beside the original with continuous pleasure, sometimes hardly needing to refer to the English, sometimes using it carefully, sometimes leaning on it so heavily that Mr. Binyon bears the full weight of Dante's thought.

We are often told that the *Purgatorio* is the dullest part of the *Divine Comedy*. Personally, I find it in many ways the most interesting, because I can accept the idea of Purgatory far more easily as an account of life as I know it than I can accept either the idea of Paradise or Eternal Damnation. The *Purgatorio* seems to me to have as direct a bearing on contemporary life as have two great modern poems, *The Waste Land* and Rilke's *Duinese Elegies*. For what Dante's Purgatory provides is not punishments that fit crimes, but an account firstly of the frustrated love which expresses itself in sin, and secondly of the form which this frustration assumes when it is its own punishment. Again and again, one finds in the *Purgatorio* that the description of the way in which the avaricious, the proud, the gluttons, etc., spend their time in Purgatory is simply an amazingly profound account of the psychological need for love which expresses itself in a perverted form and produces suffering. What is called sin is punished by love, because if love is unsatisfied man hunts for it in some distorted form; but the impulse which produces perversions of love is still love, driving its victims on until they find the true instead of the false object.

Modern man lives in an Inferno, or, at best, a Purgatory which is fairly easy to relate to Dante's view of the *Divine Comedy*. The chief crime of an industrial age against life as it is understood by all the great poets and saints is the refusal to give sufficient significance to the fundamentals of the human situation, without which life has no significance. Poetry, death, love, etc., are submitted to the machinery of something outside man, regardless of man's psychological needs: in the last analysis this machine outside man has its own foundation of money. No one can read the *Purgatorio* without seeing how far profounder the whole view of life is here than in any philosophy which the modern world can provide. To put it briefly, in Dante, everything human means something in a system of Divine understanding; whereas in the modern world, it is very difficult to see whether anything human means anything. Meaning is only attached to non-human machinery and mechanistic views of society. No doubt there are tendencies to restore a poetic significance to life, both in Socialism and psycho-analysis, but the process is painful and slow, and the connections which are so easily seen in Dante are very quickly lost in the modern world. And meanwhile the frustrated forms of expression which provide their own punishment overwhelm us. The greatest evils from which the world suffers to-day are rather like Baudelaire's attempt at least to give the world the significance of Hell.

But the *Purgatorio* is not an account of damnation, it is an account of suffering, which is more like an explanation which the psycho-analysists have rediscovered for us than the generally held view that suffering, like death, love, and aesthetic experience, is something accidental and isolated from the rest of life. In Purgatory, the gluttons are those who are famished, perpetually pursuing a phantom satisfaction of their appetites. As Forese, one of them, explains to Dante:

A virtue from the eternal will
Descends into the water and the tree
We have left behind, whereby I waste thus ill.
And those who, singing, weep, as thou dost see,
That appetite they followed with such heat,
Holy again through hunger and thirst shall be.
The scent that from the apple comes so sweet
And from the sprinkling of the leaves with spray
Fires us with craving both to drink and eat.
And not once only, while the appointed way
We circle, is renewed for us the pain—
I say pain, but I ought "solace" to say—
For that Will leads us to the tree again
Which led Christ to say "Eli" and be glad,
Freeing us with the blood out of his vein.

It does not require a very great effort of faith, or suspension of faith, on the part of the reader to understand that those who are avaricious, in this world or another, are so because they are unsatisfied. Their hope, which may save them from perpetual frustration, is the fact that they are unsatisfied, so that they may be "Holy again through hunger and thirst."

The quotation above is a very good example of Mr. Binyon's manner. It will be seen that he uses the triple rhyme with great skill; it is possible that this translation may stimulate other contemporary writers to attempt a stricter and more musical triple rhyme than Mr. MacLeish used in *Conquistador*, the one notable recent experiment in a rough and free use of this metre. Mr. Binyon has not only added to our understanding of Dante's vision of the Divine Comedy, but also of the sweet new style, of which Dante wrote:

. . . I am one who hearkens when
Love prompteth, and I put thought into word
After the mode which he dictates within.

STEPHEN SPENDER

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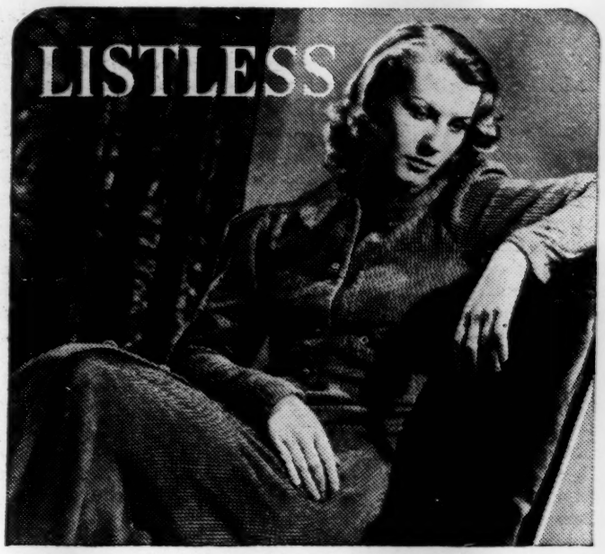

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Mr. Isaacs writes frankly as a Trotskyist, and he is out to prove that "the catastrophe of the second Chinese revolution was prepared under the direct leadership of Moscow." In 1925–27 the policy of the Comintern with regard to the Kuomintang, as laid down by Stalin and Bukharin, was bitterly criticised by Trotsky and the Communist Left Opposition, who prophesied that the Kuomintang leaders would turn on the Chinese Communists at the first opportunity, and therefore maintained that the latter must take action independently while there was still time. Trotsky wrote on April 3rd, 1927, in an article refused publication in the Soviet press, that "the policy of a shackled Communist Party serving as a recruiting agent to bring the workers into the Kuomintang is preparation for the successful establishment of a Fascist dictatorship in China." To this criticism Stalin replied in a speech two days later: "The Kuomintang is a bloc, a sort of revolutionary parliament, with the Right, the Left and the Communists. Why make a coup d'état? . . . When the Right is of no more use to us, we will drive it away. At present we need the Right. It has capable people, who still direct the army and lead it against the imperialists. . . . So they have to be utilised to the end, squeezed out like a lemon, and then flung away."

That was on April 5th. On April 12th at 4 a.m. in Shanghai "the machine-guns broke loose in a steady roll" and the Kuomintang forces began the massacre of their Communist allies, killing them by hundreds and by thousands, wherever they were to be found. Within a few days the slaughter in Shanghai was repeated in Ningpo, Foochow, Amoy, Swatow and Canton. In Shanghai, as the author puts it, the coup "came as no surprise to anyone except the workers," for a fortnight previously (according to information reported by the correspondent of the *New York Times*) a combine of more than fifty Chinese banks, firms and commercial associations, closely linked with the foreign interests in the city, had offered Chiang Kai-shek a fund of 15 million Shanghai dollars "on condition that he suppress Communist and labour activities." There was a large rake-off for Hwang Ching-yung, chief of detectives to the French Concession Police and head of the most powerful of the criminal gangs of Shanghai; he provided bands of picked gunmen to assist the troops in rounding up the pickets of the General Labour Union. Pai Chung-hsi (now Chiang Kai-shek's right-hand man in the war against Japan) received $1,500,000, but that did not prevent him from telling the correspondent of *Pravda* a few days before the proscription: "The Chinese revolution forms part of the front of the world revolution. . . . Sun Yat-sen instructed us to co-operate with the Communists and we shall not break the alliance with them."

The destruction of the Chinese Communist Party in the cities was brought about without any direct intervention of British, Japanese or other foreign forces in Chinese affairs. By the end of March the Shanghailanders were fairly confident that Chiang and Pai would do the necessary killing for them. The *North China Daily News* declared that they were "the only protection of China south of the Yangtse from being submerged by the Communist Party," but added that "if General Chiang is to save his fellow-countrymen from the Reds, he must act swiftly and relentlessly." Chiang was quite willing to be relentless, but he was embarrassed by the fact that a large section of his army was in sympathy with the Communists, and he might have missed his stroke if the Communists had not had their hands tied by express instructions from the Comintern not on any account to fight against him. In accordance with these instructions they rejected the offer of Hsueh Yoh to join them with the crack First Division and put Chiang under arrest; though nominally a revolutionary party, they did nothing but wait to be butchered.

Chiang Kai-shek cannot be said to have "betrayed" the Communists, because one cannot betray a cause to which one has never adhered. Chiang is not, and never has been, a Marxist; his faith is pure nationalism, and in his eyes the class war is simply a schism dividing the nation and reducing its strength in relation to external foes. Even without the blandishments of the Shanghai plutocracy he had every reason for trying to rid himself of the Communists. What is remarkable is not that Chiang should have done his best to exterminate them, but that they should ever have expected him to act otherwise; what is still more remarkable is that, after the bitter experience of the years 1927 to 1937, they should then for a second time have renounced their social revolutionary programme and placed themselves under Kuomintang leadership in a "national united front." Are they likely to fare better this time than before? The richest capitalists of China have put their money in foreign banks and are waiting to see how the war turns out; if Chiang wins, they will be there to reap the harvest of victory, and if he is clearly beaten, they will make their terms with Japan on the basis of the Anti-Comintern Pact. In either case the Communists will be in for trouble, and it will not be easy for them, having once abandoned their land-expropriation programme, to resume a revolutionary leadership of the peasant masses.

The Great and Beloved Leader of the World Proletariat presumably knows what he is doing; all Communists at any rate have to believe him infallible on pain of expulsion from the Party. But Mr. Isaacs' book should go far to explain why there is such a thing as Trotskyism in the world, and why Stalin's theory of Socialism in a single country has been—in the words of a Trotskyist writer—"the main dividing line between two irreconcilable camps."

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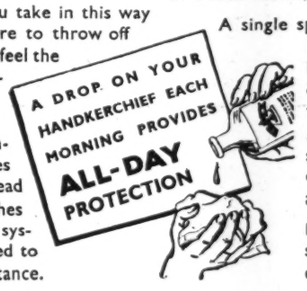

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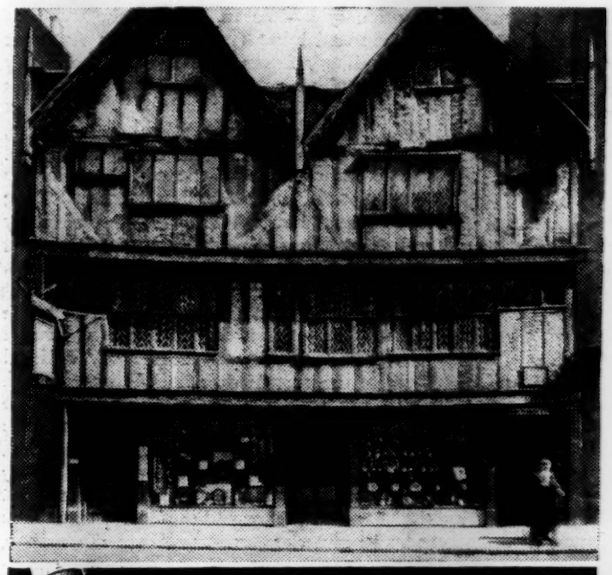

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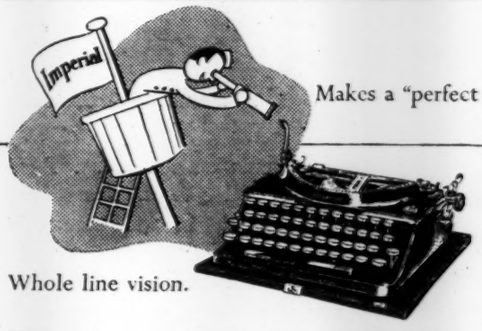

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Like so many revolutionary leaders in Ireland, she was half English and, to add to the scandal, her father had been Assistant Adjutant-General of the military forces in Dublin. At an early age she was in complete rebellion against Victorian chaperonage and Dublin Castle society. Her first act of revolt was when, at seventeen, she disobeyed her guardian, a wealthy London uncle, who forbade her to go to a labour meeting in Trafalgar Square. She went and, to escape the pressure of the crowd, some one gallantly helped her on to the platform. She found herself talking to Tom Mann, who asked her to address the meeting. A small party of police appeared and the vast crowd melted away. Since then, Madame MacBride has spent a great deal of her life on platforms, but never again on an English platform.

The land war, Fenianism, public demonstrations, riots, baton charges, plots and counter-plots—this is an exciting book, though a trifle bewildering perhaps in its speed to the uninitiated. Political agitation in Ireland, where the crowds do not melt away on the approach of the police, has always been exhilarating, despite dangers and hardships. We may suspect that Madame MacBride has really enjoyed a life of exhilarating dangers and distant horizons. Her book brings us to Russia, Paris, where she edited a highly seditious paper, and we cross the Atlantic several times to America. But Dublin during the Victorian Jubilee and the Boer War was the vortex of protest and anti-imperial demonstrations. In shindy, scuffle and mock funerals of the Empire, labour leaders and separatists joined forces. At the end of the Boer War, Maud Gonne married Major MacBride, who was one of the leaders of the small Irish Brigade which fought for the Boers. He was executed in 1916.

According to legend, crowds used to follow this young woman through the streets of Dublin, drawn by her beauty and eloquence. But to popular legend must be added the poetic legend created by W. B. Yeats in his cycle of love-poems and plays. Her one appearance as an actress was in the little one-act play *Cathleen Ni Houlihan*, which Mr. Yeats wrote in his patriotic days. As one reads this energetic and frequently humorous book, one cannot help remembering the dim loveliness of the poet's evocations—the pearl-pale hands, the cloud-pale hair. Mr. Yeats has written the greatest love poetry of our time, but he has unfortunately linked it with the Victorian bourgeois dream of indolent beauty. Even in the later embittered poetry, in which he quarrelled with his muse, he still insisted that woman's place was the sofa. Here, in this book, the poet's heroine, with a keen sense of humour, presents her own point of view.

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THE ISLANDERS

Britain. By Mass-Observation. Arranged and written by CHARLES MADGE and TOM HARRISSON. *Penguin Special*. 6*d*.

If one has the luck to be interested in anthropology, familiar features of the culture in which one lives often present themselves in a new light. Thus after reading some book about Melanesians or Amerindians I have watched with amused astonishment news-reels of bishops blessing colours, princesses breaking bottles on ships, generals distributing *trifolium minus*. The purpose of Mass-Observation is to examine the culture of the British Islanders systematically from this point of view. Mr. Tom Harrisson and Mr. Charles Madge deserve our warmest congratulations upon the energy with which they have set on foot this lively enterprise.

Half of the new Mass-Observation volume is devoted to the study of behaviour during the crisis at the end of September. While leader-writers were declaring with habitual inaccuracy that "the whole country" was in favour of one course or unalterably opposed to another, the Mass-Observers were busily inquiring what hundreds of men and women really thought. (The number interviewed was not large enough to be certainly representative of the whole urban population, and rural opinion was not examined.) The results are not very surprising: throughout the crisis men were more critical than women of Mr. Chamberlain's policy; and whereas, on Sept. 22nd and 23rd, 67 per cent. of men and 22 per cent. of women were indignant, on the 29th (after the Munich Peace Pact) 46 per cent. of men and 59 per cent. of women were pro-Chamberlain. About one man in six and about one woman in three remained vague, indifferent or uncertain throughout. These figures prove the utility to Mr. Chamberlain (if not to the Czechs) of all that flying. The gas-masks also, it is shown, were very valuable in rallying public opinion to the support of the Prime Minister. (Incidentally the least cynical of us must wonder whether this was not the chief purpose of their distribution: if they had been intended primarily for use in war, surely an adequate supply would have been secured to Bermondsey and Birmingham, before any were sent to the remote villages of the West of England.) During the months since the crisis anti-Chamberlain feeling has again, we are informed, been rising, especially among men. Moreover, "nearly three-quarters of six thousand women studied by Mass-Observation Worktown survey vote according to the dominant male's decision."

Such information is evidently valuable to party leaders, and if the Mass-Observers continue their inquiry into the dominant factors in determining votes, each party may find itself obliged to modify its policy. Vote-catching will become a science. Already the party that stands for Imperialism supports the policy of placing our sea communications at the mercy of our most formidable enemies; already the party that stands for resisting the Fascist Powers opposes the compulsory powers which would make this resistance more feasible. With increasing knowledge of the irrational responses of the electorate, each party is likely to become still more inconsistent in its programme; and if politicians also borrow from manufacturers their scientific methods of bamboozling the public with advertisements, democracy may become unworkable.

In some of their comments Mr. Harrisson and Mr. Madge seem to me to depart regrettably from the detachment desirable in the organisers of such a survey. Their anti-Chamberlain sentiments happen to chime with my own, but that is no good reason for condoning them. (Presumably in field-work there is a greater effort to seem objective?) Moreover, they insist repeatedly that the masses are not given the facts or are deliberately misled:

> Each crisis dissatisfies more and more men and women with a situation in which they feel themselves upset for weeks by sheer lack of information, though they do not necessarily, of course, connect it with those responsible at this end for upsetting them.

This, it seems to me, is at best a half-truth. In Worktown, we are told, on an ordinary day only 0.3 per cent. of the conversation is about politics, and the bewilderment or indifference shown concerning foreign affairs is called "a symptom of a serious breakdown in the relation between the individual and society."

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But has there ever been a time in England when the majority of the people were as politically minded as they are to-day? There are to-day, it is true, a larger proportion than ever before of *voters* not interested in politics, because of the extension of the franchise. It is not, I suggest, the lack of information, but the lack of desire for information, that is chiefly responsible for this indifference or bewilderment. In Utopia every citizen would no doubt have the historical, geographical, strategic, economic and psychological knowledge required to form a just opinion upon the particulars of foreign policy. And it is most important to procure the extension of educational facilities, by means of wireless as well as of schools, to make our democracy better informed. But it is ridiculous, I think, to expect the majority of citizens to form a reasoned judgment on so intricate a matter as the Munich agreement. That during the seven years of the National Government this country has fallen from security to acute danger is a plain fact that the ordinary voter could understand. But even the best-equipped specialist can base his opinion about Munich only upon a nice calculation of probabilities. Personally I believe that Mr. Chamberlain was most probably wrong; I cannot however conclude that if the majority of citizens were given a little more information, they would necessarily agree with me. I labour this point because a notion is current that democracy can only be justified if the great body of citizens are acutely interested in politics. I believe this to be a profound mistake. In modern Greece the man in the street is much more interested in politics than in England, and that has not helped to preserve democracy. The greatest value of a vote is not that it should be used, but that it can be used. This prevents Governments passing grossly unpopular measures—it entails, in fact, government by consent. And I can learn from history no other method of securing this most desirable object.

The other sections of *Britain* investigate All-In Wrestling, the Lambeth Walk, the Two Minutes' Silence, Astrology, and what is facetiously called "A slight case of Totemism." The Lambeth Walk investigation must have been great fun for the investigators, but the conclusions could have been achieved by much simpler methods. The "Totemism" inquiry is rather slapdash. The account of the All-In Wrestling cult is more interesting, but it includes an odd questionnaire: the patrons of the ring were asked to place the following "items" in the order of their importance to human happiness—knowledge, security, equality, humour, pleasure, action, religion, leadership, beauty, politics. (The resultant votes placed the "items" in the above order.) But how can one say whether politics is more important than leadership, or pleasure than action? They are not in the same category. One further little criticism: the composer of the Lambeth Walk, we are informed, "speaks even faster than Victor Gollancz." Does not this mild joke suggest a somewhat parochial state of mind in the investigators? Most people have never had the pleasure of listening to Mr. Gollancz. After reading this book, I feel more convinced than ever that the energy of the Mass-Observation organisers would benefit from a more rigorously scientific control. The chief point of the anthropological method is to facilitate detachment from the emotions which are being investigated.

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Death on the Instalment Plan. By LOUIS-FERDINAND CÉLINE. Trans. by JOHN MARKS. *Chatto and Windus.* 10s. 6d.
L'Ecole des Cadavres. By LOUIS-FERDINAND CÉLINE. *Denoël.* 30 *frs.*

As I read through the six hundred pages of *Death on the Instalment Plan* and went on to re-read *Journey to the End of the Night* (authors like Céline must grip like an obsession or not at all), a comparison was forming in the back of my mind. Where, though in very different circumstances, had I met that raging misanthropy before? Not in the classical literature of disgust; Swift, Baudelaire were fascinated by the spectacle of human degradation, but it evoked their severest style. *Candide* is the type masterpiece of this sort, its elegance spiced with dirt. But somewhere, surely, I had come across a writer who out-Yahooed the Yahoo, who ranted and bellowed back. Léon Bloy! That savage old mystic, not so many years dead, who dabbled in mud with one hand while the other was raised in the gesture of prophecy. His autobiographical novel, *Une Femme Pauvre*, is an extraordinary performance, heroic, transfigured, vilifying as only the utterance of a disagreeable saint can be. What sustained Bloy through a life of suffering and poverty was quite as much his hatred of humanity as his religious faith. Everywhere, in the Paris he inhabited, he found meanness, cruelty and filth triumphant; the walls of his hovel stank of death—and his child caught diphtheria and died; he had only to glance at the window to see grinning faces pressed against the glass. *Une Femme Pauvre* contains scenes of squalor so grandiose and terrifying that they lurk in the memory like a nightmare which one imagines one has forgotten. Again and again, the tottering Paris of *Death on the Instalment Plan* stirred that memory, and one incident—the old gossip who spies and spies till she is taken off howling to an asylum—brought it to the surface. It is virtually the same explosion of disgust, touching off the same scenic effects. For Céline, too, as for Bloy, I began to notice, the word *merde* flung back at humanity had a magical ring. This paragraph from *Mea Culpa*—an essay written by Céline after his visit to Russia—might have satisfied Bloy:

> Man is, after all, "human" just about as much as a chicken is a flier. When a hen gets a good swift kick in the tail, or when a motor car sets her waltzing, she can sometimes make it about as high as a roof, but flops right back into the mud, to resume pecking at the dung. That's her nature and her ambition. For the rest of us, in human society, it is exactly the same. We can cease being completely swinish only when some catastrophe strikes us. When the emergency passes, the natural comes galloping back.

Bloy believed in a redemption as well as original sin: hence the dazzling black and white of his vision. Céline believes in original sin all right, but is more reticent about heaven. He had hoped to find it in politics, in the Bolshevik revolution; went to the U.S.S.R., was disillusioned, and turned to Fascism. We haven't had the recoil, yet, from *that*. His faith, apart from politics, seems to be modelled on the stoicism of scientists who have been martyred for their ideas. At times, it is true, he gets as far as talking about the separation of body and soul, but what he means rather is that estrangement of mind hinted at by neurosis and achieved by madness (he is a victim of the first and afraid of the second). While for Bloy heaven grew brighter as the world got blacker, Céline had nothing to do except plunge into the murk and sink. He discerns there consolations, he looks round him

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EXHIBITIONS appear on page 67.

with a thousand eyes, he gathers up the speech of the gutter into a rhetoric of his own, he finds some warmth in renewed contacts of sex, in further disillusion, in the persistence of the individual. Having no hope of eternal life, he hugs the thought of the alternative—death. The title of his novel is not rhetorical. In this autobiographical fiction life is the hallucination, death the reality. The book is inconclusive because its author is still alive. And many important things about him we are left to discover off-hand.

Compared with the earlier novel, *Death on the Instalment Plan*, though brilliantly written, is an empty book; or rather, not so much empty as redundant. It will disappoint Céline's admirers, of whom I am one. The *Voyage*, despite length, was a search for something (the idea of death), and it contained unforgettable scenes: the early days of the war, the French soldier coming upon a town at night, lit up and deserted, and waiting for German occupation; the descriptions of the tropics and of New York. The beginning, too, in which the war emerged out of a conversation, and the end, a cold dawn in the country after pages of nightmare, were poetically right if perhaps scarcely strong enough to hold in such a disordered bulk of impressions. But *Death on the Instalment Plan* has neither beginning nor end; it is only the husk of autobiography, of which the war portion was the kernel. That Céline is an autobiographical novelist, with a restricted though profuse and vivid experience to convey, becomes obvious with this second novel. It describes the years preceding the *Voyage*, that is up to the age of twenty, to which a brief disconnected section of the present day has been added as introduction. The note, "Let's wait for death and hope it's an easy one," is struck at once, and this is followed by a narrative of childhood; as the author grows up, there is more tendency to fantasticate, to let reality ferment a little.

The publishers of Raymond Roussel's *Impressions d'Afrique* used to insert a slip next the title page: "Readers not acquainted with M. Roussel's work are advised to start on p. 267." One is inclined to suggest something of the sort with this novel of Céline's. Begin, let us say, on p. 322 and you will land yourself in a brilliant Flaubertian comedy. The hero, after leaving home (and trying to choke his father) becomes attached to an editor who runs a paper for inventors; they take up ballooning, diving for treasure and eventually potato-growing speeded up by electricity. This comedy—an overblown chapter of *Bouvard and Pécuchet*—ends, as everything must end in Céline, with scenes of grim squalor. Start on page 1 and that squalor may prove deterrent.

Nevertheless, the quality of Céline's writing is so remarkable (and it loses comparatively little in Mr. Marks's brilliant translation) that any book written by him is an experience. Any novel, that is. His polemics, as represented by *L'Ecole des Cadavres*, are another matter. This hymn of hate against democracy and the Jew is unpleasant in quite a different way from the "unpleasantness" of the novels. Not even the hurly-burly, the slang and harangue, of the style (sixty-odd exclamation marks to a page) will carry a reader through to the end. The whole thing looks like a crazy extension of one of his father's rages. A novelist is not necessarily larger than his novels; on the contrary. The man who wrote *L'Ecole des Cadavres* would have been dismissed in a comic page or two if he had appeared as a character in *Death on the Instalment Plan*. G. W. STONIER

Scaffolding in the Sky. By C. H. REILLY. *Routledge.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

In this enjoyable autobiography Professor Reilly writes of his struggles, achievements, friends, and diversions during a long and useful life. The Liverpool School of Architecture is necessarily in the foreground of the picture, for it was under Professor Reilly that it grew and flourished. The influence that he exerted on the growth of modern architecture and town-planning in England was, and still is, great, for among his pupils are such men as Maxwell Fry, A. C. Holliday, who is architect and town-planner to Jerusalem, George Kenyon of Leeds, and Professor Holford. It was due to Reilly and Lord Leverhulme that the Department of Civic Design, made famous by Adshead and Abercrombie, was founded at Liverpool. The Liverpool Playhouse and the *Architect's Journal* also owe much to him. As a teacher he has the essential gift of understanding the young; what could be more young in spirit than his lecture given three years ago on the Body of the Town, and reprinted here? Not only has he admired, but he has digested Corbusier's town-planning schemes. Peter Jones's new building in Sloane Square, for which he was consulting architect, shows how, in practice as well as theory, he marches with the times. Among the most pleasant parts of the book are his stories of the great: how Augustus John shocked Liverpool before the war, by his pictures and his life—he drove his caravan down Bold Street with a stockingless aristocrat on the steps at the fashionable shopping hour; how Lord Leverhulme again and again helped the rising School of Architecture; and how, when Lutyens submitted his plans for Liverpool Cathedral to the dignitaries of the diocese he broke the tension by handing the Archbishop a box of joke matches for his cigar.

This self-portrait has the feeling of reality; able, vivid, hard-working, friendly and generous, he talks of his triumphs without boasting, and of his friends without malice. Though he has come up against prejudice and self-interest in his career, he hates the sin, and does not scourge the sinner, for he is a Christian as well as a Socialist.

Beethoven. By WALTER RIEZLER. Trans. by G. D. H. PIDCOCK. *Forrester.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

In writing this book, Herr Riezler makes only one claim, but it is a large one: "To answer the question 'What is the essence of Beethoven, and what do his works mean?'" Such a programme might well be held to include all others possible, and it almost goes without saying that the author has not answered it. Moreover, the strait-jacket in which erudition now finds itself in Germany has resulted, once again, in a commonplace, adulatory attitude to the subject, from which it is impossible that anything really new could be said. Thus, emphasis on "race" leads to the solemn assurance that Beethoven "was fifteen-sixteenths of Teutonic blood"; and psychological dogmatism prompts the following ignorant remark: "The modern theory of 'subliminal eroticism' as the root of artistic creation applies as little to Beethoven as to anyone else." The "correct" attitude renders Herr Riezler unable to accept the famous story of Beethoven's surly behaviour to the emperor and empress at Teplitz—a story which bears all the marks of truth; and elsewhere it leads to such pearls of vacuity as this observation on Bach "The word is only the occasion . . . for the music, whose expression, even where, as in the aria *Erbarme Dich!* the text is charged with spiritual ecstasy, is raised to the level of the superhuman and thus rendered objective." "Thus" is good! To such a pass are scholars brought by Dr. Goebbels' insensate command that words of art in the Third Reich should be "not criticised, but considered." If Herr Riezler's consideration of Beethoven's life and personality produces nothing new, his conclusions on the subject of the music and its nature are extremely controversial. Few people would stick up for Schering's "Shakespearean" interpretation, and most would agree with Herr Riezler that "to translate . . . spiritual content from the language of music into that of speech is utterly impossible." But from this to the absolute statement that Beethoven was a classical, not a romantic, composer, seems too long a step to be usefully taken, considering how much it passes over. It would surely be truer to

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EXHIBITIONS

THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS ART EXHIBITION
In aid of the Dockland Settlements.
26 CONDUIT STREET, BOND STREET, W.1
(The New Premises of the Royal Society of Painters in Water Colours)
JANUARY 9th to 21st, 1939
from 10 to 5
Admission 1s. 6d. Children 9d.
Hon. Secretary: M. C. CARR-GOMM, 44 Courtfield Gardens, S.W.5. FRO. 2150.

MR. GEORGE EUMORFOPOULOS. PRIVATE ART COLLECTION at 7 Chelsea Embankment, Chelsea. Open to the public on Saturday, Jan. 14th (10–4.30). Admission 2s. 6d. For Chinese Universities Relief Fund.

Retrospective Exhibition of Paintings by
MATTHEW SMITH
the collection of JACOB EPSTEIN
LEICESTER GALLERIES, Leicester Sq. 10–6.

OZENFANT ACADEMY, 170, Warwick Road, W.14. Paintings, drawings by Ozenfant and students. The Exhibition will be opened by HERBERT READ, Tuesday, 17th, 6 p.m. Closes Saturday 21st, 4 p.m.

GUGGENHEIM JEUNE, 30 Cork Street, W.1. Exhibition of paintings by G. W. Pailthorpe and R. Mednikoff, forming part of a unique scientific research. January 10th to 31st. Gallery open daily 11–6, Sat. 11–1.

say that he was both—and leave it at that. In the last (and longest) section of his book, devoted to the detailed analysis of the composer's most important works, the author, released from his ideological strait-jacket, has much to say that is interesting, sound and illuminating.

The New History of the C.W.S. By PERCY REDFERN. *Dent.* 7s. 6d.

That assiduous co-operator, Mr. Percy Redfern, published his first history of the Co-operative Wholesale Society in 1913. Since then he has made a number of additional discoveries about early experiments in co-operative wholesaling; and these, together with the ground covered in his earlier book, are briefly summarised in the opening chapters of his new book. The *New History* deals mainly with the twenty-five years since 1913. It gives an account of war-time difficulties and expansion, and thereafter of the rapid growth of the movement during the post-war decades. These historical sections are followed by a more detailed account of the various C.W.S. departments, and by a discussion of the present position of the movement. Mr. Redfern's book is very much of a family affair, written from inside the movement, mainly from the original documents, and admitting barely a word of criticism. It will be useful to those who want to know the story in detail, and in this respect it will usefully supplement the admirable critical study of consumers' co-operation as a whole, recently published under the editorship of Professors Carr-Saunders, Peers, and Sargant Florence.

In the Steps of St. Francis. By ERNEST RAYMOND. *Rich and Cowan.* 8s. 6d.

Like a true Franciscan adept, Mr. Raymond is at once lighthearted and tender. He retells the famous story without minimising the tragic element in it, and, though he is an avowed heretic, with such certainty as to the efficacy of the Franciscan attitude to the problems of at any rate individual existence that, especially at a time when interesting books are mostly rather grim reading, this must be reckoned as that rare thing, an intelligently happy book. Francis has been regarded as a kind of pious Peter Pan, and even great Franciscan scholars have found it impossible not to sentimentalise over the Little Poor Man of legend. Francis was, in fact, a child of larger growth, but not in the over-solemn Wordsworthian way, and he must have done some very hard and quite adult thinking on occasion. Thus, before embarking on his mission, he cannot but have realised the necessity of avoiding the fate of Pietro Waldo. His passion for good work would be frustrated if he were to fall into opposition to the Church and get accused of heresy. He had no time to waste on discussions of dogma. They only led to accusations of heresy. Hence, no doubt, his so-called discouragement of learning. And then, when his followers included thousands of brethren and Cardinal Ugolino and Brother Elias decided that there must be Franciscan houses and exterior discipline and imposed punishments, Francis must have thought very hard before he found a way out. He would not accept the idea of ownership of buildings or anything else, or of exterior discipline or of any but self-imposed punishments. Neither did he want to go into the wilderness and see his work end in nothing more than the foundation of a new religious order on the lines of all the others. He resolved the dilemma by resigning the headship of the Friars Minor on condition that he and those who agreed with him should rank as ordinary brethren but live in his way. Ugolino and Elias accepted the compromise but, since he survived to sustain it, Francis's own idea, instead of becoming obscured, stood out in higher relief against the relatively banal practice of his brethren and became a standard for the most sincere of his followers in and out of the Order ever since. The most astute man of affairs could not have solved the problem more ably.

Mr. Raymond visited all the places that Francis is known to have visited, and his book includes admirable photographs, maps, bibliography and index.

Week-end Competitions

No. 463

Set by V. S. Pritchett

The usual prizes are offered for revised nursery rhymes suited to a modern child, to be based on any of the classical models, such as Oranges and Lemons, Simple Simon, etc. Politics are not barred but it is hoped that competitors will consider other elements in the contemporary scene.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, January 20th.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.

3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 461

Set by Raymond Postgate

Before the war, there was a family which had a small collection of overblown romantic phrases which had passed the dividing line into absurdity. I remember three, all alleged to have been taken from *Daily Mail* serials:

His hand was cold, like that of a snake.

He paced the room, his hands behind his back, reading a newspaper.

"Ha, ha," said he, speaking in Spanish.

The usual prizes are offered for equally absurd extracts. They must be authentic (source must be indicated) and they must owe their absurdity to an effort to be impressive in one way or another. The works of Mrs. Amanda M'Kittrick Ros are *hors concours* and extracts from them will not be given prizes.

Report by Raymond Postgate

Competitors, like pavement artists, should be able to write above their efforts: "All my own work." Ignoring this unwritten rule has deprived L. Marshall Jones of the prize, for he took all his entries from *Punch*, which had thus done the selection for him. I cannot think this is fair to other competitors, but I commend some of his choices:

The Life Guards come with a soft Tum Tum.—*Wilhelmina Stitch.*

For a moment he stood there looking into her eyes. Between them was a bowl of hyacinths.—*Daily Paper story.*

The long-haired bespectacled man with a walrus moustache in a bowler hat.—*Weekly Paper story.*

There happened to have occurred at the same time the murder of a young actress with features of peculiar ferocity.—*Newspaper serial.*

The last entry, however, is not really eligible; for it is an instance not of preposterousness due to style, but preposterousness due to mere carelessness. Many competitors did not realise the difference, and others sent in instances of mere stupidity, such as:

The *José Luis Diez* was seen to leave the harbour in complete darkness.—*News Chronicle.* (C. Kett.)

Returning the verdict, Coroner Brighouse said: "I have no doubt that this woman met her death accidentally through falling from the window. I wish more people would open their windows each morning. It is a most healthy thing to do."—*Manchester Evening Chronicle.* (Allan M. Laing.)

Even at sixteen he always carried a revolver on him, and yet he did not do well at school.—Report of court case in *Daily Herald.* (Allan M. Laing.)

Or of mere pomposity, such as (E. Davis):

The proper documentation of the assertions made in Part II . . . needs separate treatment, and will take the form of a pendent study in which conflicting culture streams that could only be referred to here will be traced to their sources.—Q. D. Leavis in the "Introduction" to *Fiction and the Reading Public.*

The same competitor produced an alarming entry from a modern author, which very nearly secured a prize:

He bared his teeth of their covering of thick lips and ground them.—Liam O'Flaherty in *The Informer.*

Even more horrible was A. R. Thomas's extract from Dryden, in reference to smallpox:

Each little pimple had a tear in it
To wail the fault its rising did commit.
("Ode on the Death of Lord Hastings.")

I hesitated over a long extract from the youthful Jane Austen's *Love and Friendship*, beginning:

Two gentlemen most elegantly attired but weltering in their blood was what first struck our eyes . . . we approached . . . they were Edward and Augustus.

and ending:

Laura (said he, fixing his now languid eyes on me) I fear I have been overturned.

But it was too long, and the writer was only fourteen.

Evidence that the *Daily Mail* was not prepared easily to yield the crown of imbecility was provided by Mr. Laing:

Down below them the boilers tremble and hiss over furnaces that are actual landscapes of medieval hell.

and Mr. S. H. Groom, citing its account of Lord Snowden taking his seat in the Lords:

To gaze down, indeed, upon the hushed Upper House during the few preparatory minutes was to feel very much like an astronomer who awaits the arrival in the gentler reaches of the Milky Way of a new, brilliantly lit, and somewhat pointed planet, bringing with it its own orbit.

Mr. Desmond Cooper offered a valued old friend in a new suit:

His eyes darted round the room and alighted on a stone.—From the *Wild West Magazine* of June, 1934.

But on the whole I think the first prize must go to "Spode" for a great Victorianism, and the second to Allan M. Laing for a modern fatuity.

FIRST PRIZE

"Pish!" said Eric, now thoroughly roused.

The boy was well on the road to ruin; he had sworn his first oath.—*Eric, or Little by Little*, by F. W. Farrar. "SPODE"

SECOND PRIZE

Was it true that she had created so many . . . roles, etc., etc.? She answered, in fluent English, our questions—Yes, yes, yes, yes, in that order.—*Radio Times.* ALLAN M. LAING

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 315.—ANIMAL CRACKERS

"Please, isn't it time we had another inferential problem?"

Our local pet-fanciers are seven in number: Mr. Dog; Mr. Cat; Mr. Monkey; Mr. Rabbit; Mr. Guineapig; Mr. Hedgehog; Mr. Squirrel.

This Christmas each of them gave an animal to one of the others, while, as it happened, each received one animal. These seven animals were the respective animal namesakes of the seven fanciers, but none of the seven fanciers either gave, or received, his own namesake.

Only two of the seven gave animal gifts to one another; these were Mr. Rabbit and Mr. Monkey.

Mr. Cat was donor of the animal namesake of the donor of the dog, while Mr. Dog was donor of the animal namesake of the recipent of the dog.

The namesake of the animal given by Mr. Squirrel gave Mr. Squirrel an animal, and the namesake of the animal given by Mr. Monkey gave Mr. Dog an animal.

Mr. Squirrel gave an animal to the donor of an animal to the donor of an animal to Mr. Hedgehog.

Mr. Hedgehog gave a cat to Mr. Guineapig.

Who gave a hedgehog to whom?

PROBLEM 313.—BRIDGE IN THE BOARDROOM

The Banker lost 15 Boobles.

Owing to pressure on my space, I must defer the detailed solution until next week.

PROBLEM 312.—OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

A set of Low's cartoons goes to C. B. Gordon, Washington House, St. Paul's Road, Chichester. *Six* points are awarded.

PROBLEM 309.—FORM FOURS

When I set this problem I had quite forgotten that its solution is discussed, in general terms, by Rouse Ball ("Mathematical Recreations and Essays"). His comment is as follows:

"Another traditional recreation is, with the ordinary arithmetic and algebraic notation, to express the consecutive numbers from 1 upwards as far as possible in terms of four 4s. Everything turns on what we mean by ordinary notation. If (*a*) this is taken to admit only the use of the denary scale (e.g., numbers like 44), decimals, brackets, and the symbols for addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, we can thus express every number up to 22 inclusive. If (*b*) we also grant the use of the symbol for square root (repeated if desired a finite number of times) we can get to 30. . . . If (*c*) further we permit the use of symbols for factorials we can express every number to 112. Finally if (*d*) we sanction the employment of integral indices expressible by a 4 or 4s, and allow the symbol for a square root to be used an infinite number of times we can get to 156: but if (*e*) we concede the employment of integral indices and the use of sub-factorials we can get to 877."

A fascinating *corpus* of material has been sent me by solvers, a number of whom demonstrate, in their examples, how under my conditions every number up to 112 can be attained. I could put together quite a learned dissertation from the various papers submitted. Selecting my six prizewinners has been an invidious task; I have finally chosen the following: A. H. Adams, 5 Thornton Rd., Wimbledon, S.W.19; B. J. Birkle, Jacia, Upperton Rd., Sidcup, Kent; Z. C. Hall, Applegarth, Regent Rd., Lostock, Bolton; A. L. Meyers, 6 Herne Hill Mansions, S.E.24; Mrs. O. D. Mooney, 6 Cavendish Gardens, Liverpool, 8; E. B. C. Thornett, Monks Walk Cottage, Much Marcle, Herefordshire.

About thirty others sent in lists of numbers, and comments, comparable in interest to those of the prizewinners, Low's cartoons are awarded to R. Beveridge, 28, Morton Street, Portobello, Midlothian.

CALIBAN

PRIZES FOR PROBLEM SOLVERS

A set of Low's cartoons is awarded to the sender of a correct solution selected at random.

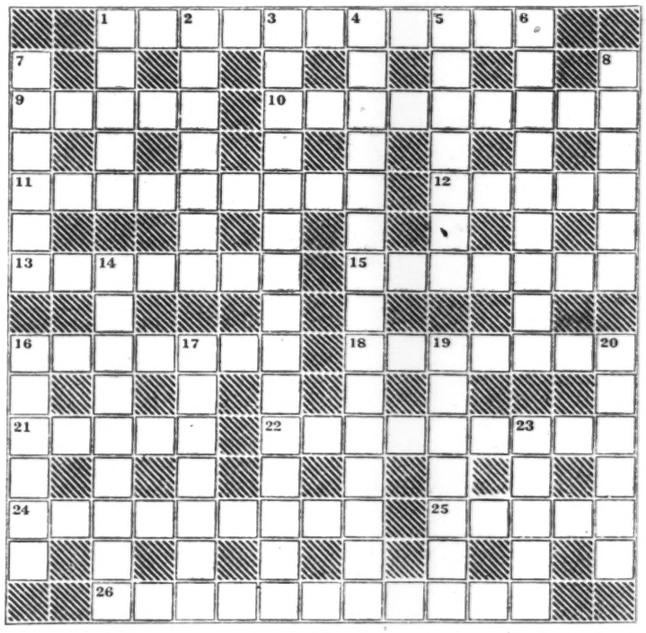
In addition, a record is kept of correct solutions sent, and of the points scored weekly by solvers. On attaining 100 points a solver is entitled to a prize consisting of any book (or books) reviewed or advertised in these columns, of a value not greater than 10s. Solvers who have won a prize on this basis are eligible for a second prize on attaining a further 120 points, and for a third prize on attaining a further 150. Solutions must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o the Editor, and must reach this office not later than Tuesday week following publication of the problem. Solutions to two problems may be sent in one envelope, but on separate sheets of paper.

Some indication should be given of the method of solution.

[U.S.A. Competitors. The Editor regrets that the prizes offered in our Week-end Competitions cannot apply to American competitors.]

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 462

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is

Chas. R. Smith, Ardfardach, Bridge of Allan, Stirlingshire

ACROSS.

1 & 9. Black plant? (11) (5)

10. They are the reverse of headstrong. (9)

11. Able to 17. (9)

12. In Paris his role is poetic. (5)

13. The carriage will be needed for this. (7)

15. Hearty contract, as it were. (7)

16. His methods are secretly telling. (7)

18. The piggery breaks the line of fashion. (7)

21. This animal is not a modest Winnie the Pooh. (5)

22. Usually the first concern at the House. (9)

24. Mr. Crummles took farewell of Nicholas in the highest style of it. (9)

25. Work-ing part of the surgeon's task. (5)

26. Grub-by partners take the floor for this. (11)

DOWN.

1. Chapter headings. (5)

2. The aster says all about me and us. (7)

3. Not the shape of the shire in London. (15)

4. Place of Royal want. (15)

5. If I had a donkey and he wouldn't go, I should put him in one of these. (7)

6. The tale of a skyscraper for instance. (9)

7. The fairy goes feet first. (6)

8. Is this the object of a steeplechase? (6)

14. She was given to shady sports, one is led to suppose. (9)

16. "Did ever Dian so——a grove.
As Kate this chamber?" (6)

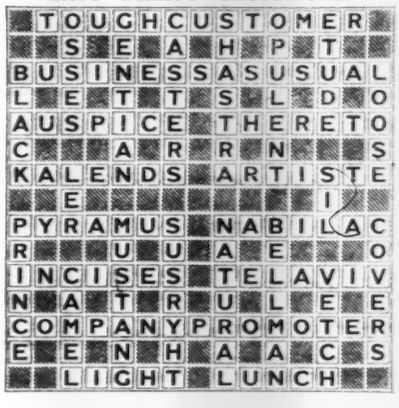
17. Tied down probably, though. (7)

19. Your get-up is impossible unless you do this first. (7)

20. The present tense always includes it. (6)

23. The daisy's point of view perhaps. (5)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD



THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By DIVES

THE MARKETS—GOLD AND STERLING—BANK SHARES

In these politically overcast days it takes more than one Woolworth to make a market summer. Tuesday's announcement by this remarkable firm that net profits were up by nearly £500,000, and that the dividend would be raised from 60 to 65 per cent., made Woolworth 5*s.* shares look cheap at 58*s.* 6*d.*, and they rose to 60*s.* Apart from this, however, the Stock Exchange has done little more than mark time. Gilt-edged issues improved by a point on the rally in sterling which followed the replenishment of the Exchange Account's gold stock. Home railway prior charges were marked down all round on the announcement of Southern's 4 per cent. 1970–80 Debenture issue at 1½ per cent. discount; and, though the lists for this issue were closed on Wednesday by 10.30 a.m., there was further selling of the Junior stocks that afternoon when the week's dismal traffic return, showing a drop of £331,000, was published. As for the week's two important industrial mergers, the market reaction to the projected Gaumont-Odeon cinema deal was favourable. Gaumont 10*s.* Ordinary have risen 9*d.* to 4*s.* 9*d.*, and Odeon are 1*s.* higher at 7*s.* 6*d.* The hope is that co-ordination of these two groups, controlling ultimately about 800 theatres, should lead to considerable economies; but the larger question, whether there has not been over-building of super-cinemas, remains to be answered. News of the John Summers-United Steel link-up was greeted with rather less enthusiasm. The market is inclined to wonder whether demand in this country can absorb the output of the Shotton and Ebbw Vale (Richard Thomas) strip mills, both under the Bank of England's aegis, in the event of a post-rearmament steel recession.

* * *

Reinforced by the transfer of £350 millions' worth of gold from the Bank of England, the managers of the Exchange Equalisation Account have not, so far, used their augmented resources very adroitly. The first reaction on the part of speculators short of sterling was hurriedly to cover their positions. Had the Control sold pounds freely, a useful holding of dollars could have been accumulated. Instead, the rate was allowed to rise abruptly from $4.63 to over $4.68; and at this level not merely did repurchases of pounds cease, so that little was done to reduce the open "bear" position, but on Tuesday the Continent again turned sellers of sterling. Clearly the technique of managing the sterling exchange on the defensive has not yet been perfected; but it is at least satisfactory to find the authorities ready apparently to use gold for its one useful purpose—i.e., to settle international payments and prevent the exchange being disturbingly affected by the flux and re-flux of floating capital. During the past nine months Britain has parted with something like £250 millions in gold as the result of the withdrawal of "funk money," mainly owned by foreigners, deposited here in 1933–37, and shifted recently to New York under the influence of fear of European war. There remains (taking 140*s.* per ounce as the basis for valuation) £208 millions in the Bank's reserve and probably about £420 millions in the hands of the Exchange Account. Since liquid foreign assets in London are now much reduced, and the pound anything under $4.65 is by general consent not over-valued in the light of our current price level and trading balance of foreign payments, there seems no reason to doubt the authorities' ability, with the gold resources available, to keep the exchange reasonably stable—with one proviso. Withdrawals of balances and speculative short selling on foreign account can be dealt with; a flight of domestic capital would raise more awkward problems. Whether they will arise, or not, depends on how far the political situation in Europe deteriorates after the Rome visit, and how far the Government's Defence preparations succeed in reassuring the City that the country could withstand war successfully.

* * *

There is a general belief that British bank shares can be bought by investors for stability of income, but banking profits are always among the first to feel the effects of a trade decline. Last year all the "big five" disclosed lower profits, although the experience was not uniform. The Midland fared the best with a decline of no more than 2½ per cent., the Westminster being the worst with a decline of 11 per cent. Of course, profits are always shown after unspecified allocations to reserve and contingency accounts. There is no reason to suppose that the Westminster had any worse experience than the others in the matter of bad debts. The following table which gives the "gross" profits arrived at by adding back both income tax and N.D.C. makes the figures as nearly as possible comparable both as between different banks and as between different years:

	(In £000's)			
	Peak: 1929.	Slump "Low."	1937.	1938.
Barclays	2,910	2,070	2,960	2,790
Lloyds	3,180	1,920	2,540	2,480
Midland	3,330	2,690	3,480	3,550
Nat. Provin.	2,310	1,650	2,100	2,000
Westminster	2,700	1,950	2,420	2,260

The Westminster is the only one to lower its distribution. In 1937 it paid the 2 per cent. bonus in addition to the regular dividend of 18 per cent., and this year it is omitting the bonus. The dividend yields obtainable at present market prices are shown in the next table:

	1938. High.	1938. Low.	Present Price.	Div. %	Div. Yield %
Barclays Bank £1 "B"	76/9	61/–	74/–xd	14	£3 15 9
Lloyds Bank £5 shares, £1 pd. ..	64/6	49/–	58/–xd	12	£4 2 9
Midland Bank £1 f.p.	89/6	72/6	85/–xd	16	£3 15 3
National Provincial £1 f.p.	86/9	73/9	77/6xd	15	£3 17 6
Westminster Bank £4 shares, £1 pd. ..	99/6	77/–	91/6cd	18	£3 19 9

The outlook for 1939 is not so good for banking profits. Advances are still declining, and the authorities still appear to be pursuing a deflationary banking policy. Not until the Government shows a resolve to finance rearmament by loans, to cheapen money and to expand credit should the investor become a bull of bank shares.

* * *

To holders of bank and insurance shares I commend, by the way, the Bank and Insurance Shares Year Book, published by the Trust of Insurance Shares, price 10*s.* 6*d.* The Year Book gives a concise and useful analysis of the accounts of banks, discount and insurance companies for the past seven years, together with a complete record of dividends, share prices and yields.

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